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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

PARAMILITARY STUDY GROUP MEETING

AT THE PENTAGON

1 MAY 1961

SEVENTH MEETING

PRESENT

GENERAL TAYLOR

MR. KENNEDY

MR. DULLES

ADMIRAL BURKE

MR. McGEORGE BUNDY

ADMIRAL CLARK

CAPTAIN CRUTCHFIELD

CAPTAIN KENSCHER

COMMANDER McGRIFFIN

LIEUTENANT COLONEL EGAN

COMMANDER MITCHELL

LIEUTENANT COLONEL TARNWATER

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CASE # NLK- 98-100
DOCUMENT # 9

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(The following news is not to be used to represent the substance of the statement.)

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At the opening of the meeting General Taylor tabled a list of nine points concerning the Cuba operation on which he wanted additional information from CIA. CIA agreed to provide this information as soon as possible. ^{Tab: 1-5+9} The hope was also expressed that the interviews could be finished this week and that the final report would be ready for the President by the 15th of May.

ADMIRAL CLARK

Admiral Clark, the Commander of the Navy Task Group in the operation, was the first person to appear before the Group. In his introductory remarks he made the point that all the orders he had received were good dispatches and clear and that they were all carried out fully; that his evacuation efforts, however, were difficult because he couldn't fire back and because the waters in the Bay were restricted.

QUESTION: With regard to the one-hour period when you were flying CAP for the CEF air unit there is some indication that there may have been a misunderstanding on the time. Please describe what happened.

ANSWER: Yes. We were ordered to fly cover for the CEF bombers from 0630 to 0730 Romeo on the morning of the 19th of April. However, I decided to play this one safe and ordered my people to be on station one-half hour early in the event that the CEF aircraft made the trip quicker than they had anticipated. However, they came over our ship one hour early and consequently we launched our aircraft immediately. We arrived over the beach area forty minutes before 0630 Romeo. However, by that time the CEF aircraft had already made their strikes and left.

At this point Mr. King was requested to check with the CEF air forces and determine what caused the time discrepancy.

QUESTION: Would you describe what you saw on the reconnaissance flights on D+1 and D+2?

COMMANDER McGRIFFIN: On D+1 at approximately 1530 there was lots of traffic moving down the east side of the Bay. There were a number of tanks, trucks and there were six or eight burned-out busses. The tanks were not burned out apparently, however, because while they were stopped on the first flight at 1530, we checked again at 1730 and by that time they had moved. On D+2 we saw some burned-out friendly tanks. The enemy had established a

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roadblock in an area north of the beachhead. A large number of trucks and forces were converging on the area from all directions. About 1200 on D+2 we saw the CEF all bunched up at the little resort on the beach.

QUESTION: You got the impression that there was a rapid and intensive reaction by Castro?

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Admiral Clark, do you have any recommendations that you'd like to make with regard to the Cuba operation or any future operations of this sort?

ANSWER: I believe it went better than we had a right to expect. Possibly once the rules of engagement have been established, it would be desirable to give the commander on the spot a freer hand.

QUESTION: What do you think were the reasons for failure?

ANSWER: One obvious reason was that surprise was not achieved.

RESPONSE: All the evidence we have had to date indicates that tactical surprise was achieved.

ANSWER: Well, the opposition formed awfully fast. I think Castro's people saw the CEF force from a lighthouse and they also could have seen them from the air. Another possible reason for failure was that the beach was not as advertised. It was supposed to be a sandy beach, whereas it was coral. Furthermore, the opposition was not as advertised.

QUESTION: Could they have been seen by the lighthouse?

ANSWER: Yes, sir, they could have seen us very clearly from the lighthouse.

MR. DULLES: We have no evidence of any reports originating from this lighthouse. I'll have to talk to Mr. Lynch.

STATEMENT: With regard to the evacuation of the CEF force, on the last day we couldn't have evacuated the force unless we were prepared to fight our way in. If we'd been allowed to use counterforce we could have taken them all out. On D+3 we started our destroyers cruising along the beaches a couple of miles from shore at night and five miles from shore during the days so that the survivors could see us and would come out. A group of refugees of the invasion force did make their way to the keys west of Cochinos Bay and we picked them up. However, we picked up no one on the east side of the Bay. Without using counterforce it was impossible to move in to pick up survivors during the daylight because we were straddled by artillery fire at three miles offshore.

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QUESTION: With regard to the possibility of the invasion forces having been sighted from the air, did any aircraft fly over or did you pick up any airliners?

ANSWER: Yes. Furthermore, since the convoy formed in the daylight, it could have been seen from the air.

STATEMENT: Well, let's ask Colonel King to check with the people that planned the naval portion of the operation and determine whether or not this lighthouse had been considered as a factor in the operation, and whether or not the force was supposed to come within sight of the lighthouse.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL EGAN

At this point Admiral Clark and the officers of his command left and Lieutenant Colonel Egan appeared before the Group. Colonel Egan stated that he was the operations officer for the project.

STATEMENT: Prior to September the Cubans were being trained as guerrilla teams. I went down on an inspection trip, during which the Guatemalan revolution broke out. We were concerned about the possibility of losing our bases. President Ydigoras requested that we make an airborne landing, which we did. I was in command of the outfit. Washington gave us permission to do this, but I operated under the Mission Chief in Guatemala.

MR. DULLES: We can give you the facts on this.

COLONEL EGAN: Following the Guatemalan revolt I was sent down to organize the brigade. On the 20th of November 1960 we had about 420 members in the Cuban force. During this period we were trying to build up our brigade and by the 8th of December we initiated a seven-week training program with approximately 575 to 600 troops.

QUESTION: Who were the trainers?

ANSWER: At this time I had five American trainers and Cuban officer personnel to assist in the training. However, it must be remembered that we weren't dealing with raw recruits.

QUESTION: How did you determine the background and potential leadership capabilities of the various persons in the brigade?

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ANSWER: We had background files on each man. However, the actual selection for leadership positions depended on the performance of the men in the field.

QUESTION: Did you have political problems?

ANSWER: At first, yes. However, as it became obvious that no one received any special privileges and that all ranks were only temporary, and that if a man selected for a position of leadership couldn't handle the position he went back to the ranks, when these factors became evident the political problem subsided.

QUESTION: Tell us something of Pepe.

ANSWER: He came from a long line of military officers. His father was a General in the Cuban Army. Pepe was a Captain in the Cuban Army. He had trained at Fort Benning, Georgia. He could work with anyone. He was earnest, proud, self-sacrificing and a natural born leader.

QUESTION: Did you say you had ample leadership and training?

ANSWER: Adequate leadership and training, yes, but not experience.

Twenty per cent of our troops, however, were former soldiers.

QUESTION: Did you have any reservations as to the readiness of this force?

ANSWER: No. I felt that each week they delayed would bring a retrogression in the force.

QUESTION: Was there ever any discussion of U.S. participation or direct assistance in this operation, militarily speaking?

ANSWER: Yes, there were rumors, but we carefully pointed out that diplomatic and logistical support would be given, and the lines of communication would be kept open. Beyond this, however, no support could be expected from the United States.

QUESTION: Did they feel betrayed when the United States aircraft didn't come in?

ANSWER: Yes. It was obvious that the enemy was using jets and the United States jets were visible to them and, of course, they couldn't understand why they didn't come to their assistance.

QUESTION: Then it was a natural reaction rather than their having been told that the United States would enter on their behalf?

ANSWER: Yes.

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QUESTION: Did you think that the United States aircraft would come in and support the force?

ANSWER: I hoped so, but I didn't believe so.

QUESTION: Were instructions given as to what to do if the operation failed?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: What?

ANSWER: There were several contingencies: (1) If we passed the code word they were not to make the landing. (2) If the landing malfunctioned due to heavy surf or enemy opposition they were to disperse according to plan. They were to be evacuated by boat, and as a last resort they were to disperse and continue guerrilla operations in the swamp.

QUESTION: Were any specific areas in the swamp assigned for guerrilla operations?

ANSWER: No, sir.

QUESTION: Then when they fell back to Blue Beach they were doing what they were supposed to do so that they could be evacuated?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: Could a man penetrate and live in the swamp?

ANSWER: Yes, a man could penetrate, but a unit couldn't, and there was enough small game, fish and fresh water in the swamp that men could survive.

QUESTION: If you had to evacuate the men by sea how would you have moved them out?

ANSWER: By the same boats that brought them in. We had 36 18½-foot aluminum ships. As I recall, I thought he mentioned that the men were searching for and using indigenous boats.

QUESTION: Do we have any evidence that Pepe ever gave the command for the force to become guerrillas?

ANSWER: No.

QUESTION: Do you believe that some of the men of the force could have come through the swamp?

ANSWER: Yes.

COLONEL EGAN: The pilots of the aircraft carrying the airborne troops said that the troops at DZ-1 were attacked by approximately 800 militia.

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QUESTION: Do you believe that the landing was a surprise?

ANSWER: Yes, sir, because the time it took Castro to get tanks and artillery to the beachhead area were the exact times that we thought it would take to move this equipment from known positions.

QUESTION: Did you like the terrain for this operation in the Zapata area?

ANSWER: On the basis of the restrictions, yes. This would have worked. These boys were good. The only thing they lacked was ammunition.

STATEMENT: Four out of five drops were successful. We don't know what happened to one drop over Red Beach.

QUESTION: How many instructors did you end up with?

ANSWER: Forty-four.

STATEMENT: I didn't have one AWOL for three weeks before the landing, and no one failed to go with the force, nor failed to jump with the airborne unit.

QUESTION: Who screened the people assigned to this force?

MR. DULLES: First the Cubans and then our Counterintelligence people.

COLONEL EGAN: We had four double agents.

QUESTION: Do you think that agents got word back to Castro as to what you were doing?

ANSWER: Yes. Retalhuleu had 120 card-carrying Communists, including the Mayor. However, in an attempt to maintain security, I stopped all outgoing mail three weeks before the operation, and all incoming mail was stopped for seven days prior to the operation. Of course, these troops had a number of secret channels.

QUESTION: Was your camp adequate?

ANSWER: It could have been better, but it was adequate.

QUESTION: Why wasn't it possible to rehearse the amphibious landing?

ANSWER: We did have a partial rehearsal, but we couldn't bring the vessels to the Pacific side where our camp was for this would have meant bringing them through the Panama Canal.

QUESTION: I want to go back to the guerrillas. Who might have eluded capture?

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ANSWER: A number of men from most of the positions. All these men were given compass and map reading and other guerrilla training.

STATEMENT: To sum up the guerrilla situation then, there was no particular training directed toward it, as such, primarily because you had pretty good guerrillas to start with.

COLONEL EGAN: Yes, sir.

STATEMENT: Also, for morale reasons you had not briefed the entire force on the possibilities of having to take to the swamps as guerrillas. However, the day before the force left you did brief the commanders on guerrilla operations and the fact that you felt that the primary means of evacuation was sea-borne and airborne evacuation, and only if all other things failed would the force attempt to operate as guerrillas.

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: What would have been the consequences if, just before this invasion was launched, the men had been directed to conduct guerrilla type operations?

ANSWER: They probably would have revolted.

QUESTION: But I understood that they initially wanted to go in as guerrillas?

ANSWER: Yes, but we showed them the advantages of mass firepower, and I believe that they were convinced that the shock action against Castro's forces in meeting this firepower would cause the militia to break and run, and spark mass defections.

QUESTION: Then while the Cuban exiles originally wanted to conduct guerrilla operations they had been convinced that this was a rather unremunerative approach to the problem?

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Where are the refugees being debriefed?

ANSWER: At Miami, Puerto Cabezas, Norfolk and Vieques.

STATEMENT: While we don't want to get into the matter in too much detail here, it seems that for historical reasons it would be a good thing if CIA would prepare an after action report on the over-all operation.

ANSWER: Yes, we are doing that.

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QUESTION: What would have happened if the operation had been called off after the first part of April?

COLONEL EGAN: It would have depended upon the posture they were in at the time. If it had been called off after they were actually on the way they would have taken over and kept going. I was informed that if the operation was called off they would take over. They said that as a friend we want you to direct all your people not to resist if this comes about, because we don't want anybody to get hurt. Consequently I had all our people turn in their side arms. I would say that after the 1st of April it was a go operation.

STATEMENT: With regard to the merchant ships that went into the beachhead area, let's determine just what orders were given to the ships and by whom. Also, let's look into Lynch's story about the fact that they were going to take ammunition into the beachhead area in an LCI, but by the time the operation could be undertaken it would have been daylight before they arrived, so the mission was cancelled.

MR. McGEORGE BUNDY

The Group reconvened at Mr. McGeorge Bundy's office at 1415. In attendance were:

GENERAL TAYLOR

MR. McGEORGE BUNDY

MR. KENNEDY

COMMANDER MITCHELL

MR. DULLES

Lt COLONEL TAWATER

(The notes of Mr. Bundy's interview have been replaced by the memorandum dated 4 May 1961.)

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SIGNED FOR

(EXTRACTED FROM THE MEETING)
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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May 4, 1961

Dear General Taylor:

I regret to say that I am not satisfied with the account of our interview which appears in the Memorandum for Record submitted to me today by Colonel Walmsley. It seems to me that I can do a better job of presenting my views on this matter by sending you a memorandum covering my position on the points which are discussed in the Memorandum of Record.

The President on his entry into office was faced with a decision of disbanding or using the Cuban force in Guatemala. He was informed that the force must leave Guatemala within a limited time, and that it could not be held together in the United States for a long period. It would begin to deteriorate; its existence could not be kept quiet; and if it were disbanded within the United States the results would be damaging.

When the Cuba plan was initially presented to the President, he did not like the scheme for an amphibious landing. He requested that a plan be drawn for infiltration of the force so that it might emerge as a Cuban force already on Cuban territory. The report from CIA was that this notion was not likely to be successful, and instead the agency proposed a modified plan for an unopposed landing in a much less populated area. This was the Zapata Plan presented by Mr. Bissell in the middle of March 1961. As work on this plan progressed, the gradual impression developed that on balance the CIA preferred this plan to the original Trinidad Plan.

It was clearly understood that the Air battle should be won. The views of the Joint Chiefs were presented in writing, and while there was no clear discussion of the opinion of the Joint Chiefs

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as to the relative merits of the two plans, I think these two statements are correct: (1) that there was no impression left that the Joint Chiefs as such preferred the Zapata Plan; (2) it was clearly understood that they had approved the plan and favored the operation on this revised basis. I base this statement upon the fact that the President repeatedly asked for the opinion of representatives of the Defense Department including members of the Joint Chiefs, and was invariably informed that the Defense Department favored the operation. I do not think this was merely a matter of "concurrence by attendance." The military certainly wanted the operation to proceed; I do not think that this was because of a deep conviction that this was the best possible plan -- it was rather that in view of the absence of desirable alternatives and the press of time, the military believed that the prospects were sufficiently favorable so that it would be best to go ahead. I would not wish to go further into detailed analysis of the motives or positions taken by the Joint Chiefs.

Success in this operation was always understood to be dependent upon an internal Cuban reaction. The first military phase would have been considered successful if it had established a beachhead that could be supplied effectively from outside and joined from inside by defecting Cubans. I do not think that the President was led to feel that the landing operation depended for its first success on immediate uprisings throughout Cuba. On the other hand, reports were made in the last few weeks that gave some hope that the chances of defections and uprisings were growing.

One of the serious misunderstandings in this operation, in my opinion, was over the practicability and likelihood of a guerrilla operation by the landing force. The President repeatedly indicated his own sense that this option was of great importance, and he was repeatedly assured that the guerrilla option was a real one. As one listening in the same way that he listened to most of the discussion before him, I was left with the clear impression that unless there was a quite unexpected catastrophe in the beaching process itself, a substantial portion of the force

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would almost certainly be able to survive for a prolonged period in guerrilla operations. I do not think there was any extended discussion of the relative quality of the Zapata Plan as against the Trinidad from a guerrilla standpoint. There was a considerable discussion of the option of a sea evacuation, but I do not recall that there was a clear decision as to which of these secondary alternatives would be preferable. My point is simply that the President steadily insisted that the force have an alternative means of survival, and that he was steadily assured that such an alternative was present. As I recall it, the report of the Joint Staff on the Zapata Plan explicitly included assurances on the guerrilla option.

While it was recognized that the invasion force was much smaller than Castro's army, let alone his militia, the argument for landing it was that it would have much greater fire power, together with air supremacy, while the enemy would have to come toward the beach along narrow defiles. The invasion force would win the first battle because its soldiers were better fighters, with better equipment. After they had won this first battle, the balance would change; the will to fight of the Castro forces would be reduced; defections would begin; uprisings would occur in other parts of the island, and so on.

One startling omission, in retrospect, is the failure of any of the President's advisers to warn of the danger of the T-33s. I suspect that one reason for the later decision not to launch an air strike on the morning of D-Day was that this capability of the Castro air force was never put forward as significant.

While in retrospect I believe that too much attention was given to what General Taylor has called the question of "attribution," it certainly was believed that it would make a great political difference to have this force essentially Cuban. The Americans were offering moral, political and logistical support, but not battle forces. A question of shading is of course involved. At any rate, on March 29th or April 4th there was a direct statement by the President in a meeting that he wanted all U. S. forces out of the operation, and I recall no word of opposition to this decision at this meeting. Afterwards, there was further discussion, at

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which I was not present, between the Department of Defense and the CIA, and agreed revisions were worked out. If those responsible for military judgment on the operation felt that the President's instructions were unacceptable, it seems to me that there certainly should have been some statements of this view.

In my meeting with General Taylor and his advisory group, I was asked about the decision not to permit an air strike by the Cuban invasion force early on Monday morning. This is a matter which arises from a conversation with the President and the Secretary of State, and I do not believe I am the right man to comment on it. I do have the recollection that during the presentation of the Zapata landings, the impression was conveyed to the President that there would be no strikes on D-Day that could not plausibly come from an airstrip in Cuba.

I have the general impression that all of those concerned with this operation were gradually put into an intrinsically unsound position because of the increasingly critical Cuban situation and the lack of desirable alternatives. Under these pressures the military planners, who had been given instructions by an earlier Administration, became advocates, rather than impartial evaluators of the problem. Moreover, I believe that many people were reticent in their representations to the President.

Mistakes were made in this operation by a lot of people whom the President had every right to trust, as a result of circumstances of all sorts. In the future, any such plan should have much more careful preparation and evaluation, and the President should have intelligence estimates presented to him by others than advocates. In the future also the President should have an explicit White House review, so that he can have an independent judgment, especially on points of interdepartmental responsibility.

I do not concur in any judgment that this operation was "run from the White House." What happened was rather that as trouble began to develop after D-Day, there was steady pressure

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on the President for a relaxation of rules which had previously been made, and in the light of changing circumstances some such relaxations were authorized. Only in the case of the decision on Sunday with respect to the D-Day strike was there an operational modification that restricted, instead of enlarging, the authorizations to the CIA. This, as I have said, is a matter on which others can comment more effectively than I. Nevertheless, I would agree that the rules of action should be more clearly stated in the future, and responsibility delegated within those rules to a man near the scene of action. I regard this as a somewhat academic point, because I doubt very much whether large-scale operations of this sort can or should be "covert."

I accept as accurate the statement of my views which runs from the middle of page 13 through the middle of page 14, and I specifically endorse the comment attributed to me that if the military had said at any time that calling off or modifying the air strikes would cause the operation to fail -- or even damage it severely -- the President would have reversed any such decision as that on Sunday.

McGeorge Bundy

McGeorge Bundy

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and evaluation as to whether or not it will be effective. Furthermore, the President should have intelligence estimates presented to him by others than advocates.

QUESTION: What about interdepartmental cooperation.

ANSWER: I wouldn't be a good judge of this. However, I wouldn't become involved in such a plan again without knowing what the interdepartmental cooperation was. In the future the President should have an explicit White House review. He should hear something from other than advocates.

QUESTION: Would it have been feasible to let the DOD handle the operation, say, with CINCLANT running it with a POLAD alongside and operating within established parameters. Would it be better to have it run this way or to have it run from the White House.

ANSWER: I don't think we controlled the operation from the White House.

RESPONSE: The messages make it appear that it was very close to this. Was this desirable.

ANSWER: I think it would have been better to set forth more clearly established parameters and then delegate the responsibility.

STATEMENT: My own judgment is that while this is important from the lessons that can be learned, I don't think it was just one thing that caused the failure of this operation. I think there are a number of lessons to be learned: (1) If you take on the political risks of this sort of an operation you must succeed big and quick. I think the concept of possibly starting a prolonged civil war might have been more damaging than the defeat we suffered. (2) I think that in a new administration everyone must make an unusual effort to overcome their natural reticence in the presence of the President and be completely frank with him. (3) The obsession with secrecy made for a less careful study of the plan than would have otherwise been made. I think there were a number of reasons that led both the CIA and the military to become advocates rather than impartial judges of the plan.

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(5) I think the quality of the estimates of Castro's forces was a serious factor. For example, their operational doctrine was estimated to be virtually nonexistent, and yet they seemed to have a very clear understanding of the value of control of the air. (6) I don't think we worked hard enough to advise the President and I am not sure that all of us felt we were his advisors on this project. (7) I think the misunderstanding of the likelihood of the requirement for guerrilla operations was serious. (8) We exaggerated the necessity to do something with the Guatemala force. (9) As I reflect on the covertness of this operation, I'm amazed that we thought there was a chance of deniability. (10) I think the men that worked on this got into a world of their own. I don't believe the failure was "because of the want of a nail."

QUESTION: What about the desirability of using U. S. advisors in Cuba as we did in Korea?

ANSWER: If there were Americans in the land force the President was misled and I'd have been against it.

GENERAL TAYLOR: I don't believe the military view, such as held by Colonel Hawkins, was strongly presented to the President.

MR. KENNEDY: People that actually have to carry the operation through don't have access to the President.

MR. BUNDY: I had the strong feeling that if the military had said that calling off the air strikes would have caused the operation to fail the President would have reversed his decision.

MR. DULLES: One thing I'm not clear on is whether or not the forces encountered by the invasion force were Castro's elite. Actually I blame myself a bit on the guerrilla thing. I think we were misled by the fact that Zapata was a traditional guerrilla area, because the only real course of action in the event the operation didn't succeed was sea evacuation.

MR. BUNDY: I think there was nothing wrong with the organization, as such. I believe that failure resulted from the failures to give the President the help he needed.

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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

PARAMILITARY STUDY GROUP MEETING

100 CONFIDENTIAL
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
LWS 3-20-2000

AT THE PENTAGON

EIGHTH MEETING

2 MAY 1961

PRESENT

GENERAL TAYLOR
MR. KENNEDY
MR. DULLES

GENERAL LANSDALE
MR. ROBERTSON
MR. LYNCH
MR. GEORGIA
CAPTAIN RYBERG
COLONEL KINARD
MR. KING
COMMANDER MITCHELL
LT COLONEL TARNWATER

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CASE # NLK- 98-100
DOCUMENT # 10

ULTRA SENSITIVE

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(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

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MR. ROBERTSON

The first person to appear before the Group was Mr. Robertson who had been aboard the BARBARA J. He stated that their mission on the BARBARA J. was to escort the HUSTON, to provide beach markings, and to provide gunfire support for the troops at Red Beach. He further stated that the BARBARA J. was armed with nine .50 cal. machine guns, three .30 cal. machine guns, and several other .30 cal. automatic weapons.

STATEMENT: We were due to arrive at Red Beach at 0100 and we arrived there at 0115. The weather was fine and everything was just fine for the landing. I went in with the beach marking crew. We met no enemy resistance in marking the right side of the beach.

QUESTION: Did you run into any coral?

ANSWER: Yes, but we had only minor difficulty with it.

STATEMENT: After marking the right side of the beach we moved over to the left side. When we were about 40 yards offshore they opened fire on us with what I believe were a number of small automatic weapons. We engaged them with our .50 cal. machine gun and our .30 cal. machine gun which were mounted on our boat. We never got the second marker light set. However, I provided the marking by blinking with my hand flashlight and it worked all right. They got in O. K. When the troops went ashore there was a lot of firing. About 50 militia came out of the city. They apparently had been there on a vacation. They didn't turn out the lights in the village, which was rather dimly lighted, and there was a huge construction project south on the west side of the beach that had extremely bright lights burning. Within 20 minutes after the landing six or seven trucks started from the construction project with armed men aboard. I called in fire from the BARBARA J. and the first burst of .50 cal. and 75 mm shells hit the truck column and stopped it. We were later told that the men aboard the trucks dropped their guns and ran, believing that we were part of a major sea invasion force. After I was engaged the commander of Red Beach departed with about two-thirds of his craft because he felt that

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he should get ashore as soon as possible. Each of these men had 96 rounds of ammunition, plus about 80 rounds of additional ammunition. On the second trip back to the beach I received machine gun fire from the left flank and one of the men in my boat was killed. Then I heard some explosions which I believed were incoming mortars or possibly 80 mm artillery.

QUESTION: Were you visible on the water?

ANSWER: No, sir, the moon was gone.

STATEMENT: About an hour before daylight I noticed that the movement ashore wasn't progressing. I didn't hear any boats moving. I heard that the HUSTON was having trouble with her boats, so I got two rubber boats from the BARBARA J. and went over to the HUSTON and found eight aluminum craft tied on the opposite side of the ship not being used. It was the 5th Battalion Commander's responsibility to get the men from the Huston ashore. However, he wasn't in any hurry and he didn't want me to take the boats and men in. Anyway we started ashore. As we were moving in it was gray, just at first daylight, about 0600. About this time a B-26 came at us on the deck firing at us with his .50 cal. machine guns. On his first pass we didn't have time to do much but duck, but on the next pass, since we had a .50 cal. and a .30 cal. machine gun and four BARs aboard, I decided that rather than just be shot at we should shoot back. On the next pass we fired at him and he wounded one of my men. However, on the third pass when he passed over he came so close that we could feel the propwash, but after he passed over he started smoking, and we later heard that he had crashed. Immediately following this first B-26 another came in making firing passes. Then our C-46s came in with our paratroopers and they had two of our B-26 aircraft flying cover. Following this a Sea Fury came in. He fired rockets and strafed the HUSTON and the BARBARA J. and these two ships, with most of the 5th Battalion and supplies aboard, moved out six miles.

QUESTION: Why weren't the ships unloaded?

ANSWER: Because of the press of time.

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QUESTION: Why do you think you were unable to unload during the time you had?

ANSWER: Possibly we were a little overoptimistic in our planning and possibly because of the complete darkness.

QUESTION: How much tonnage did you have to go ashore?

ANSWER: I don't know exactly in terms of tonnage. However, we had a 10-day supply for the Red Beach personnel.

RESPONSE: That's a lot of ^{boat} trips.

ANSWER: Yes, sir. Of course, it would have worked if Castro's aircraft hadn't showed up.

STATEMENT: After we'd pulled out six miles we started back in. However, about that time a jet aircraft came in and fired two rockets into the HUSTON and two rockets into the BARBARA J. He split the seam on the BARBARA J. and we started taking water and the HUSTON reported no steerage and was heading in toward the beach. We directed that the HUSTON put its engines in reverse and told them that then we'd tow them out. However, the HUSTON had started to sink and he was under attack by a B-26, and there was gas on the water, so the Captain ran the HUSTON aground about 50 to 75 yards offshore and all the men jumped off in their life jackets. About 45 minutes after the grounding I received word that approximately 170 men from the HUSTON wanted to be evacuated. However, we had orders to rejoin the fleet because it was under air attack. So I told the men from the HUSTON to consolidate and wait. I told them that they couldn't count on us to evacuate them, but that we would resupply them, and transport them. I told them they should try to rejoin the troops on Red Beach. I then asked them to describe their position, and told them that we'd air drop some equipment and supplies to them. They described their position and stated they also wanted boats so that they could get some supplies off the HUSTON which they could take into Red Beach. About a half an hour after this communication Castro's aircraft started to attack the HUSTON again. I believe they may have intercepted the message which described the men's position and talked about the supplies aboard the HUSTON.

- 3 -
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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

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STATEMENT: On D-Day a brave thing happened. One of our two B-26s was shot down and the other one was out of ammunition and yet he asked what he could do to help. I asked him if he would circle us and run a bluff to keep Castro's aircraft away. He did this until he had only enough gas to get back to base with a 15 minutes fuel reserve.

QUESTION: You could have evacuated these men if you had been ordered to do so?

ANSWER: Yes, sir. However, the intent was for these men to join up with the rest of the force at Red Beach.

STATEMENT: At this point we were ordered to go out 13 miles and wait until night. We started out with the ATLANTICO, CARIBE, BLAGAR, and the LCUs. As we moved out we were under attack by a B-26 and a Sea Fury. The B-26 was shot down.

QUESTION: How many men got ashore at Red Beach?

ANSWER: Two hundred seventy out of 399.

QUESTION: How much ammunition did they have?

ANSWER: Enough for two days of fire.

QUESTION: Is this all they had with them - their rifles and this ammunition?

ANSWER: No, they had four 81 mm mortars, four light machine guns, some 57 mm recoilless rifles, some grenades and some BARs.

QUESTION: They shouldn't have run out of ammunition on D-Day, should they?

ANSWER: No, they must have wasted their ammunition.

STATEMENT: I'm troubled by the fact that all you had to unload your supplies with were these small boats.

RESPONSE: Yes, sir, but all the materials were packaged so that they could be handled by one man. We just formed a chain gang to unload the packages and brought a boat up alongside.

QUESTION: This procedure would have tied up a lot of men, wouldn't it?

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

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ULTRA SENSITIVE

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GENERAL TAYLOR: I would like to state my understanding now, so that the record will be clear. The order was given to withdraw all the ships from the beach area on D-Day at about 2:00 P.M. The order was for all the ships to rendezvous about 13 miles offshore. You and the LCUs stayed in the convoy, but went beyond the 13-mile rendezvous point before you stopped, and the CARIBE and the ATLANTICO took off and disappeared. You actually stopped about 7:00 P.M., which meant you had been steaming about four hours at six knots, so you should have been about 24 to 30 miles out. Is that correct?

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

GENERAL TAYLOR: Having reached this area, you then on your own initiative started loading the LCUs with supplies from the BARBARA J. You were about two-thirds through when you got the orders to turn around and go in again.

RESPONSE: Exactly, sir. The message came from Washington at about 2000 or 2100. It directed the B-J to go in with a 500-man pack. The BLAGAR was to come in with the slower LCUs. However, the BARBARA J. was leaking and all the 500-man packs were aboard the BLAGAR, so it was decided that the BLAGAR would go in with the packs, with the B-J and the LCUs following. However, there was about a four-hour delay before the ships were ready to go in.

QUESTION: What caused the delay?

ANSWER: I don't know, sir. The BLAGAR was to pick me up and it didn't pick me up until 10:30.

QUESTION: The BLAGAR did start in then at about midnight, and did the B-J and the LCUs follow?

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SECRET EYES ONLY

ANSWER: I don't know. We steamed toward the beach, however, until about 4:00 A.M., when we were ordered to turn around.

QUESTION: What was the speed of the BLAGAR?

ANSWER: Ten knots.

RESPONSE: Well, at 10 knots for four hours, it would seem that you could have made the beach.

QUESTION: Did you have an order to turn around and, if so, who sent it?

ANSWER: I don't know exactly what happened, but whatever happened, happened so naturally that I was not disturbed. I was a little fuzzy at this time as I had been up for four days and four nights.

QUESTION: Did you here in Washington know of the order to resupply the beaches?

MR. KING: Yes. It was a surprise to us to learn that they hadn't been supplied. We didn't know that the CARIBE and the ATLANTICO had taken off.

QUESTION: Do you recall when you realized that the beach supplies had not been received?

MR. KING: After dawn the next day.

After additional discussion with Mr. Robertson, it was decided that he should write a chronology of the events and submit it to the Group for further study.

MR. GEORGIA

Mr. Georgia was responsible for the communications plan for the operation. In making his presentation he utilized several charts showing the communications nets and agreed to provide the Study Group with desk size copies for their records.

STATEMENT: Prior to the invasion we had Morse radio communications throughout most of the key points in Central America. However, in [REDACTED] Swan Island we had radio teletype. Our main centers in the United States were in Virginia and in Florida at the University of Miami. We had agent circuits in Cuba. At one time there were 25 such circuits.

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ALL INFORMATION

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QUESTION: Is the Florida communications center permanent?

ANSWER: A decision has not been made yet. However, I am recommending that it be continued to train Latin Americans in the future.

STATEMENT: For the strike and pre-strike phase we included another teletype link to Puerto Cabezas and another Morse link between Puerto Cabezas and Managua, Nicaragua. The ships were tied together by the TAGBAR circuit which was our operational circuit.

QUESTION: How did Washington communicate with the force?

ANSWER: Originally from the L Building Signal Center. However, the traffic became too heavy and the 28th of December we opened the Signal Center at Quarters EYE. We had two circuits from Quarters EYE to RIMM in Florida. We put in two parallel circuits because of atmospheric conditions and in case there was a requirement to pass a flash message.

QUESTION: How long did it take to get messages from Quarters EYE to the LCI?

ANSWER: The clear text traffic got from Quarters EYE to the LCI in about four minutes. As far as code is concerned, our original plan was to use two cipher machines aboard the LCI as the operators. However, the operators aboard the LCI stated that when the stuff started coming in, it came in so fast that they couldn't handle it by code. Consequently on the 7th of April at about 9:00 A.M. local time the messages started coming in in the clear.

STATEMENT: To the best of my knowledge there were no serious time lags in the transmission of information from the BLAGAR to Washington.

QUESTION: What were the reasons for the cipher problems aboard the BLAGAR?

ANSWER: Two reasons. First, the machines broke down. Consequently we had to resort to one-time pads which are time consuming. Second, the traffic became so heavy that the operators abandoned all efforts to encipher the information.

QUESTION: With regard to sending these messages in the clear, didn't this seriously jeopardize the objective of non-attribution?

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ULTRASENSITIVE

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ANSWER: These messages were sent by a K-26 scrambler which makes it impossible to determine where the messages are coming from.

QUESTION: Did you have a direct link with Pepe?

ANSWER: Yes, within seven or eight minutes.

QUESTION: How were the messages that came into Washington handled?

ANSWER: They were immediately seen by Colonel Hawkins who made any tactical decisions that may have been necessary. If they involved higher level decisions, Mr. Esterline, Mr. Bissell or Mr. Cabell would take the message to the State Department or the White House.

QUESTION: Was there a routine sending of messages to the State Department or the White House?

ANSWER: No, only on special issues as determined by the higher-ups.

MR. KENNEDY: I'd like to get all the messages that were sent out from Washington and those that arrived, plus all the coded messages.

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: What would you change if you had it to do over again?

ANSWER: I don't think I'd change anything, except possibly to give further scrutiny to the cipher system and determine whether or not the equipment did in fact break down. If it did, we must develop better equipment.

MR. LYNCH

At this point Mr. Georgia left and Mr. Lynch was recalled in an attempt to clarify what had developed after the ships had been ordered out on D-Day. Recalling these events, Mr. Lynch covered much the same ground as Mr. Robertson and he did relatively little to clarify the chronology. However, he did add one new point when he stated that he may have given Pepe the impression that the Navy air CAP would come in and stay for the duration of the operation rather than advising him that the Navy air CAP would only be provided for one hour. He stated that this had been his honest impression, and that he had not purposely mislead Pepe. However, in fact, he had given Pepe the wrong impression.

- 8 -

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~~EYES ONLY~~

~~ULTRA SENSITIVE~~

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~~EYES ONLY~~
CAPTAIN RYDBERG

At this point Mr. Lynch left and Captain Rydberg, the skipper of the ELAGAR, appeared before the Group. After a few introductory remarks he was asked whether or not it was possible that the ships of the invasion force had been sighted by the lighthouse. He replied that it was entirely possible, stating that he had seen the lighthouse very clearly. Much of Captain Rydberg's testimony was essentially the same as that of Mr. Lynch and Mr. Robertson. Consequently, only those portions of his statements have been included that contain new or differing information.

STATEMENT: We picked up the crew of the RIO ESCONDIDO and they rather demoralized our crew so that we had something of a mutiny aboard ship, in that they refused to go back to the beach again. However, I talked to them and pointed out that there were 1200 men on the beach and we were only 60 and that we had to try and help them.

QUESTION: When did you leave the beach?

ANSWER: About 10:00 A.M. I sent the message to take all the ships out to sea and give them protection. I had to get the ships off the beach for there was no maneuverability and we had to go slow, five and a half knots. After we got away from the beach I called the ships to join together, but only the B-J returned. At about this time my blue net went out and I had to conduct my communications through the BARBARA J. I used my green net to work with the BARBARA J. During this period we kept steaming south toward Point Zulu where we had been ordered to rendezvous. While enroute someone down in the engine room from the RIO ESCONDIDO tried to stop the engines of the ship. Again I tried to explain the situation to the men from the ESCONDIDO and five of my own men as to the requirement for our getting supplies to the men on the beach.

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QUESTION: Were any Americans involved in the group that were refusing to go back in?

ANSWER: No.

STATEMENT: After I had talked to these men we continued on, but I could not find the whereabouts of the ATLANTICO or the CARIBE. Later I found out that they could hear me, but they would not answer. Finally they showed up at Point Zulu on the 18th of April at about 1600.

QUESTION: Did everything you wanted to send back to Florida have to go through the BARBARA J.?

ANSWER: No, I had my own wireless to Florida.

QUESTION: What messages did you receive?

STATEMENT: The first message I received directed me to steam out of the Bay and stand by. The second message directed me to go to Zulu, and the third message directed me to go to Charley-Charley, a point further south.

QUESTION: On the first night was there any discussion relative to sending in supplies?

ANSWER: Yes, sir, but we were at Charley-Charley and the message came in too late, at about 2400. Prior to this, however, I had steamed around Point Charley-Charley and unloaded the B-J into the LCUs.

QUESTION: When did the ATLANTICO and the CARIBE get back?

ANSWER: About 1600 on D+1.

QUESTION: Did you unload the ATLANTICO?

ANSWER: Yes, but not the CARIBE.

QUESTION: When did you get the order to load the LCUs and go back in?

- 10 -
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~~ULTRASENSITIVE~~

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ANSWER: During the day of D+1 before the ATLANTICO and the CARIBE got back.

MR. KENNEDY: The decision to permit a daylight cargo run was made at about 1400.

QUESTION: When did you finish loading the LOUs?

ANSWER: About 2230.

STATEMENT: We were ready to go about 2300. As we headed back in I sent a message that unless we got support we couldn't go in in daylight. I requested air cover. I never got a reply to my request for air cover. However, later on, while steaming north I got a messagelnot to go in, that I should remain out at sea.

STATEMENT: Following this on D+2 there was talk about evacuation so I formed two convoys, one with my ship and the two merchant ships, and one with the BARBARA J. and the LCUs. I steamed full speed ahead toward Blue Beach and sent a message at the same time requesting permission to go in. I gave Pepe an ETA of about 1630. However, Pepe said that it was too late. In the meantime, I got a message to lay off 15 miles to help evacuate. Later on I got word that the evacuation was cancelled. I was about 30 miles out from the beach heading north when the evacuation was cancelled. Later I received orders to go back to Charley-Charley with the LCUs and some of us got orders to go to Stock Island in Florida. I don't know where all the other ships went, but we set our course for Florida. Following this they asked me if I could take my ship back to Stock Island with only the Americans aboard for a crew. When I replied in the negative they told me to go to Vieques.

QUESTION: Do you have any suggestions on how this operation might have been done better?

ANSWER: Well, I think if we'd had LSDs we could have unloaded right out the front instead of with little boats as we tried to do. Oh, and the beach wasn't the best. We lost two LCVs in the first landing we made. Another thing, a man should get a ship, not one of those things we had. I'd like to have had something like a Coast Guard cutter. Also, we had a lot of explosives and ammunition aboard. I don't know if that was advisable.

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- 11 -
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GENERAL LANSDALE

At this point Mr. Ryberg left and General Lansdale appeared before the Group

QUESTION: What part did you play in this operation?

ANSWER: I was a Deputy to General Erskine and we had a small component that furnished support to the CIA. Our first real action was last March when we obtained a radio transmitter and helped get it and other facilities installed on Swan Island. We also arranged for the use of Fort Sherman for training troops. From then on I continued in the support role up until December when the Willauer Group came into being. It was shortly after this, in January, I believe, when the JCS and General Gray became involved in the plan and our office essentially became a monitoring agency. Then I was gone for a month and when I came back I was made a personal Assistant to Mr. McNamara on much of this. We were getting supplies for the operation and making facilities available - that sort of thing.

QUESTION: Did you attend Special Group meetings?

ANSWER: I attended two as Assistant to Mr. Douglas.

QUESTION: Did you see enough of the planning to discuss how it went?

ANSWER: First, I'd like to say that I am not a Monday morning quarterback. However, I expressed some comments that it seemed to me that they should do more to get a popular base for the operation. For many valid reasons, however, the decision was made that this was not necessary. From then on we tried to support the operation in every way that we could.

QUESTION: Do you believe that the Department of Defense evaluation and support came into the picture soon enough?

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Was the State Department brought in on the operation soon enough?

ANSWER: That's difficult for me to say. However, I believe that the general concept had agreement from State, although they

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objected to certain specific details.

QUESTION: Should this kind of an operation be assigned to CIA, or should the responsibility be split, or should the DOD do it all?

ANSWER: I think there should be a more clear line of command. However, I don't think it matters who is in command so long as the person is competent. I believe that this particular operation should have been handled by CIA. However, it was coming close to one that should have been handled by the DOD. Essentially I believe that there should be one leader for an operation. All activity should be under one leader with specialists from each of the other agencies and departments as required. I believe this could probably be handled by an ad hoc committee.

QUESTION: You are really saying that there should be a task force of representatives of various agencies with one leader?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: How would your concept differ from what is being done now?

ANSWER: It would be tasking by a leader who would have subordinate leaders. Furthermore, I would have a means of calling to the attention of the President situations that couldn't be handled by the ordinary machinery of the Government.

MR. KENNEDY: I think we have to come up with some sort of a plan so that we can take actions before the situations develop to the point where it is almost certain that we'll get licked.

GENERAL LANSDALE: You have to establish a method for surfacing the best views on what to do about a situation and get these views before the President.

MR. KENNEDY: What we need is a mechanism that's continually in operation in the Government determining what we are going to do all over the world. We shouldn't just wait until the crisis is upon us.

GENERAL TAYLOR: I disagree with the ad hoc task force concept, but we must have a national pattern for handling these situations.

GENERAL LANSDALE: In developing a military capability in the

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- 13 -
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various nations of the world, I believe you have to start on a political base. The people in the country concerned must feel that they have something worth fighting for and we must use the local people.

QUESTION: Do you agree that it is not sound to isolate paramilitary activities from the rest of the cold war?

ANSWER: Yes, it is only part of the cold war.

COLONEL KINARD

At this point General Lansdale left and Colonel Kinard appeared before the Group to give a briefing on Special Forces. In his briefing he explained that Special Forces participated in unconventional and psychological warfare. He explained that unconventional warfare consisted of three parts: (1) Guerrilla action, (2) Evasion and escape, and (3) Subversion. He stated that our Special Force units are trained to organize indigenous personnel in conducting unconventional warfare. He further stated that at the present time there are three basic Special Force units, one in Okinawa with 364 officers and men; one at Bat Toltz, Germany, with 346 officers and men; and one at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, with 1,100 officers and men. He stated that the equipment is now standardized for these units. Members of the Special Force units are all airborne qualified [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He stated that there is a back-up of Special Forces in the Reserve and the National Guard. The Reserves have 1,456 officers and men authorized and 1,000 in being. In the National Guard there are 938 officers and men.

QUESTION: How is the re-enlistment rate?

ANSWER: Good. Some of our men have served in all of the three units.

Colonel Kinard then gave a description of the psychological warfare battalions and the loud-speaker and leaflet companies. He stated that at the present time they have psychological warfare elements in both Europe and the Pacific.

QUESTION: Suppose we wanted to put unconventional warfare units in Viet-Nam at this time?

ANSWER: This would not be difficult. We have been training people in Southeast Asia, including Viet-Nam, over the last six years.

At this point members of the Paramilitary Study Group had to excuse themselves to attend another meeting and Col. Kinard was invited to return the following day.

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OF THIS DOCUMENT

NO JFS OBJECTION TO as directed
DECLASSIFICATION DATE MAR 14 2000

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OF NSC, DSP

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IPB/CR/IR by Shan Date: MAR 22 2000

*No. on objection
for 9/11/00*

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

NO OBJECTION
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
1005 3-20-2000

PARAMILITARY STUDY GROUP MEETING

AT THE PENTAGON

NINTH MEETING

3 MAY 1961

PRESENT

GENERAL TAYLOR
MR. KENNEDY
MR. DULLES
ADMIRAL BURKE

MR. McNAMARA
GENERAL WHEELER
GENERAL BONESTEEL
MR. [REDACTED] 06
COLONEL KINARD
MR. KING
COMMANDER MITCHELL
LT COLONEL TARWATER

~~SECRET~~
~~EYES ONLY~~

~~ULTRA SENSITIVE~~

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(The following notes are not verbatim, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

MR. [REDACTED] 06

The first person to appear before the Study Group was Mr. [REDACTED] who had been in charge of the counterintelligence for the Cuba operation. Mr. [REDACTED] explained in considerable detail the nature of the operation that he conducted. He stated that they knew in great detail about Castro's intelligence services. He then described the manner in which they screened potential recruits. 06

STATEMENT: We would run a personal history check on the people and then polygraph them. Following this we made a full-day psychological assessment of the individual to determine whether or not he could hold up under the potential rigors that he would face. This complete screening procedure was used with the first 120 recruits.

STATEMENT: We also created an intelligence and security agency from among the Cuban exiles. As we built this agency [REDACTED] 6(13)

We [REDACTED] in order to determine its character.

QUESTION: Do you believe that these agents talk when they are picked up by the enemy?

ANSWER: Yes. Any man can be made to talk today without the use of force and the Cubans also use force.

QUESTION: Was it difficult for the agents to operate in Cuba?

ANSWER: Yes. It's difficult to work in a police state.

QUESTION: How many penetrations did Castro make that you know of?

ANSWER: Two, [REDACTED] 6(13)

QUESTION: What was the primary reason that led to the agents being caught?

ANSWER: The Cuban talks.

STATEMENT: I still have [REDACTED] highly trained Cuban counter-intelligence staff officers in Cuba and they have [REDACTED] agents 6(13)

- 1 -

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ULTRASENSITIVE

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reporting to them. We have this capability today and we are still continuing our collection efforts.

STATEMENT: During the week before the invasion we had information from 32 tactical commanders that they would defect. This raises the question as to why they didn't. I believe these are the reasons: (1) The invasion didn't last a week. (2) The fact that this was announced as a Cuban affair between Cubans may have given them pause. At any rate, I still feel that these 32 people are assets which we may call upon at some future date.

QUESTION: Is there a major effort by Castro to put agents in the United States at the present time?

ANSWER: With all the refugees coming in we can expect him to attempt to infiltrate agents. This is a normal procedure, to infiltrate agents with refugees. A tactic we can expect is to have Mr. Castro create phony resistance organizations in order to ferret out genuine resistance activities.

MR. [REDACTED]

At this point Mr. [REDACTED] left and Mr. [REDACTED] appeared before the Group. Mr. [REDACTED] was in charge of the Foreign Intelligence Section which was concerned with reports, research, economic support, foreign intelligence operations, debriefings, State Department liaison. 06 06

STATEMENT: When the project began we had over [REDACTED] agents in the Havana station. However, a number of these had to be weeded out because of past political connections. At any rate, by July of 1960 we had set up [REDACTED] WT sets. However, we were sort of overrun by the paramilitary people because they had a need for additional agents. Consequently, we turned over 15 of our [REDACTED] sets to the PM people. By the time of the invasion we had a number of penetrations. We had [REDACTED] the Communist Party, [REDACTED] student organizations, [REDACTED] the periphery of the Communist Party and [REDACTED] the 26 July Movement, as well as others. Up until the invasion these people kept in contact by wireless or by courier, and they were also trained in secret writing. (11X3) A 11

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QUESTION: What was your general impression of conditions within Cuba prior to the invasion with regard to uprisings?

ANSWER: It was my opinion that if the people do not get arms they would not rise.

STATEMENT: In a meeting with Mr. Devine he mentioned the President's statement that no Americans would be used in the Cuban operation. He then asked me what I thought would happen if the operation was turned over to the Cubans. I told him I thought that they would clobber the hell out of the invasion force.

QUESTION: In your debriefings of significant sources, before the operation, did you detect any readiness on the part of the population to rise?

ANSWER: Yes. For example, from a U.S. businessman who traveled throughout the country I had indication that there were relatively small bands that were ready to rise.

STATEMENT: If an invasion of this sort had taken place in January when there was active resistance in the Escambrays there might have been a better chance of uprisings. However, in my estimation there was less likelihood of uprisings in April.

QUESTION: Was there any evidence of tightening up before the invasion?

ANSWER: Yes. They were tightening up before D-Day and then they really clamped down on D-Day.

QUESTION: The Press said that there had been no call to the Cubans to rise against Castro. Is that true?

ANSWER: We certainly didn't put out any call to rise for that would have been the worst thing to do. We wouldn't put out any call for the people to rise until there was something solid for them to rise to.

QUESTION: How many Soviet-Bloc personnel were in Cuba at the time of the invasion?

ANSWER: Nine hundred eighty-one with about two to three hundred military advisors included in that number.

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COLONEL KINARD

At this point Mr. [REDACTED] left and Colonel Kinard returned before the Group. Colonel Kinard continued his Special Force discussions of the preceding day by pointing out that in addition to their wartime operational requirements, they also had responsibilities for training friendly foreign forces. 06

STATEMENT: There are two aspects to this training. One is to encourage and assist in the development of Special Warfare capabilities. The other is a broader training mission of providing advice and assistance in the operation against Communist guerrillas and terrorists and activities of that sort. With respect to the first, an example of the indigenous capabilities in some of these areas is as follows:

In Viet-Nam we have a Special Forces unit called the 1st Observation Group. It was originally authorized at a strength of 305. There are now 805 in Viet-Nam and they are all part of the Viet-Nameese Army.

In Korea they have Special Forces units in the strength of 662.

Taiwan has 3,000. In addition, outside of the MAP program, the Taiwanese have a Special Forces program with 2,727 authorized.

In Thailand there are two units in this figure of 980, of approximately equal size.

QUESTION: Generally speaking, are these Special Force units in these foreign countries being trained as guerrillas, or are they being trained, as our forces are being trained, to exploit local people in guerrilla operations?

ANSWER: Sir, they are being trained as guerrillas in addition to exploiting the local people in a guerrilla role.

QUESTION: Would you prepare a memo for us on what Special Forces are available to us in the different parts of the world?

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ANSWER: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Do you have the capability to double or triple your capability in Southeast Asia, for example?

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

COLONEL KINARD: In addition to the previous expansions I have mentioned, our current plans call for a further expansion. We have proposed an increase of 3,000 personnel spaces in 1962. These plans are now incorporated in the President's budget message to Congress. We further hope to get an additional 2,000 spaces authorized during fiscal year 1963.

STATEMENT: I think you may have a problem in getting the 3,000 people that you need for your force. While you could get 3,000 people for the Regular Army, to get 3,000 people of the type that you will need may be quite difficult.

RESPONSE: The Deputy for Personnel has reported to us that he anticipates no difficulty in getting these personnel.

QUESTION: Have you done any work on special weapons that might facilitate Special Force activities?

ANSWER: Yes, sir. We have quite an extensive research program. As a result, we have developed special explosive devices [REDACTED] and other tools for our trade. (C)(X3)

STATEMENT: While we're always looking for better communications, better printing presses, lighter weight more effective weapons and so on, nevertheless we train our people to use the weapons that may be in the area in which they are operating.

QUESTION: What is CIA's responsibility for training indigenous personnel?

MR. DULLES: We train people that have to be trained covertly for behind-the-lines activities. For example, we are training [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] On the other hand, the Army trains guerrillas where it can be done by the MAAGs relatively overtly. (C)(X3)

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Colonel Kinard concluded his remarks by summing up the additional information that he had been requested to provide - personnel strengths and organizations in Southeastern Asia, the figures on U.S. Forces' capability in Special Forces and their dispositions; also, what your improved plans are with regard to planned increases in strength.

GENERAL BONESTEEL

At this point Colonel Kinard left and General Bonesteel appeared before the Group. After some introductory remarks, General Bonesteel stated that just before Christmas, stated in view of the world situation that it appeared highly desirable that a national approach be taken. He stated that they had looked at Cuba in the context of the total cold war and advocated a national plan that would move progressively through stronger applications of power until the desired result was achieved. General Gray then picked up this concept, and the Joint Staff developed it further in writing with charts, and on the 21st or the 22d of January we presented it to Dean Rusk.

STATEMENT: We'd like to get a copy of this study on this national plan.

RESPONSE: Yes, sir. It can be obtained from the Joint Staff.

At this point the Group had to excuse itself and reconvened in Secretary McNamara's office.

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SECRETARY McNAMARA

(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

At this point the Group proceeded to Secretary McNamara's office where he was asked a number of questions in an attempt to determine what the picture was as he saw it at his level of decision.

QUESTION: What was the estimate of the probability of success of Zapata?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: This should be answered in the time context of the point of no return. Actually the chances of success changed as the days went by as the plan was modified. Initially there was a smaller force, about 800 personnel. Finally there were somewhere in the neighborhood of 1,200. This increase in the strength of the invasion force, of course, increased the chances of success. The increased logistic support also tended to increase the chances of success. On the other hand, the reduced air support, the new landing area, and the reduced sea cover all tended to reduce the chances of success. However, the over-all balance indicated a marginal probability of success. It seemed desirable to go ahead for three reasons: (1) If we didn't proceed we would have to bring the invasion force back to the United States. It seemed that the general conclusion that would result from this would be the idea that the United States was unwilling to help others fight against Communism. (2) A feeling that never again would we have a chance to overthrow Castro without utilizing Americans. (3) The failure of the CEF to succeed in their operation as a unified force would not preclude the force from breaking up and continuing guerrilla operations, in which case the operation would not be viewed by the rest of the world as a total defeat.

STATEMENT: One side we are interested in exploring is the side presented by Mr. Mann.

SECRETARY McNAMARA: Tom Mann endorsed the plan before the point of no return.

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STATEMENT: Our papers indicate that on the 18th of February Mr. Bundy reported to the President that there were two points of view, Mr. Bissell's and Mr. Mann's. Was Mr. Mann the one who insisted on nonattribution?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: The desirability of nonattribution was a general view, almost to be met prior to approval. However, this can't be charged to Tom Mann.

QUESTION: Was the question of guerrilla operations in the Zapata area considered?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: Yes. However, this was considered to be unlikely because the CEF was believed to be able to control the access routes into the beachhead. If control of the access routes was lost, however, it was believed it would be easier for the invaders to get through the swamps as individuals than it would be for Castro's units. Finally, it was believed that if Castro broke through the force could be evacuated by sea.

QUESTION: Was it a major factor that this force could get to the mountains?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: Yes, it was certainly in the President's mind. It was always considered that the force could be evacuated or go through the swamp into the mountains, in which case the Press wouldn't be able to look upon the operation as a total failure.

QUESTION: What was the feeling with regard to the possibility of popular uprisings?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: It was understood that there was a substantial possibility of uprisings, possibly on the order of four or five out of ten. This led to the belief that the whole operation was marginal. Uprisings in a police state weren't expected to occur fast enough to support the landings.

QUESTION: What was expected to happen if the landing force effected a successful lodgment but there was no uprising?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: They would be split up into a guerrilla force and moved into the Escambrays.

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QUESTION: What was the understanding of the position of the JCS as to Zapata? Was it appreciated that they favored Trinidad over Zapata?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: The JCS had reviewed the plan in early January and while they considered it marginal they still believed it had sufficient chance of success to warrant its implementation. After all the modifications to the original plan were made they still believed the chances of success were marginal, but they still wanted to give it a try. There was one important modification that the Chiefs never knew about and one about which they all felt strongly. This was the decision to cancel some of the D-Day air strikes. This decision was made at the only meeting at which neither I nor the Chiefs participated. It was my understanding that both the CIA and the Chiefs preferred Zapata to Trinidad. For while Trinidad offered the advantage of close proximity to the Excmbray or guerrilla territory, Zapata offered an air strip and was likely to be less well protected by Castro, thereby raising the chances of success for the initial landing.

QUESTION: Was it understood that control of the air was essential to the success of the landing?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: It was understood that without control of the air the chances of success would be considerably decreased. The understanding of Castro's air force was not adequate, particularly in terms of the numbers and types of aircraft. Furthermore, it was assumed that a large number of his aircraft would be incapacitated. This appears to have been a major error. However, to get back to the question of control of the air, it was certainly understood that it was very important.

SECRETARY McNAMARA: It doesn't appear that we would have achieved complete control of the air even if we had made the dawn air attack.

STATEMENT: There were some reports that we knocked out approximately two-thirds of Castro's combat aircraft.

SECRETARY McNAMARA: If we knocked out two-thirds of Castro's aircraft they had a greater capability than they were expected to have.

QUESTION: What was the understanding as to the ability of the landing force to pass to a guerrilla status in an emergency?

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SECRETARY McNAMARA: Quite clear that they could function in a guerrilla status.

MR. DULLES: Actually this never had a chance to be tested.

QUESTION: What degree of nonattribution was sought and why?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: The highest possible degree because the Latin-American countries had indicated they would not support this operation.

QUESTION: Was there any doubt that, globally speaking, this operation would be attributed to the United States?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: We felt it would to a degree, but wanted to reduce this to a minimum.

QUESTION: Were the implications of the conflict between operational requirements for success and the need for non-attribution clearly understood?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: Not really. As the plan progressed there was a definite trend to reduce the possibilities of attribution. This trend took the shape of a curve and finally the plan was compromised in order to reduce the chances of attribution.

QUESTION: Do you believe that the CIA became advocates of the plan?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: It was not a CIA debacle. It was a Government debacle. There wasn't any person in the room that didn't approve the plan. Bissell in no sense was selling the operation. Colonel Hawkins was eloquent in advocating the plan. However, his presentations were so onesided that he made little influence on my judgment.

SECRETARY McNAMARA: This was a marginal operation. It was recognized that if one ship was lost we were in trouble. The feeling never developed, however, that CIA was selling this operation.

ADMIRAL BURKE: I had misgivings about the plan, but none that were crucial.

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SECRETARY McNAMARA: That's right, it was a gradual erosion of the plan, but not to the extent that it seemed desirable to call off the operation.

QUESTION: You mentioned the requirement for the clarification of responsibilities here in Washington.

SECRETARY McNAMARA: CIA should not run such large operations. They simply don't have the facilities. We could have used our facilities on a nonattributable basis. It would have been better if we could have handled the operation because we could have planned it on a much larger scale. We could have assured command control. A military operation should never be conducted except under a military man.

SECRETARY McNAMARA: We should systematize the decision making process.

QUESTION: How would you do this on a systematic basis?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: I wasn't thinking so much in terms of this as the fact that I wouldn't allow any decisions to be made or actions taken except on the basis of written documents.

QUESTION: Do you believe the absence of written documents was a consequence of security considerations?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: Yes.

QUESTION: Going back to the Cuban operation, accepting for the moment that the military should have run the operation, when should they have taken control?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: I am not qualified to answer that as I don't know enough about the CIA structure.

SECRETARY McNAMARA: Another alternative that might be desirable in the case of future Cubas is that the CIA, for example, would conceive the need for certain actions. CIA should then lay out their basic plan and when they reach the point where they feel that they should train and equip troops, the JCS should be brought in to make an evaluation. This should be done even before the President makes his decision. Then at the point when the operation

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is approved the military commander should take over so he can shape the whole operation. In the case of Cuba, for example, at the point where the Special Force instructors were requested the DOD should have come in.

SECRETARY McNAMARA: There is one point that should be emphasized, that is, that all decisions and actions should be written. This would engender responsibility.

QUESTION: How big should a force be before becoming a DOD responsibility?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: To answer that question you need a detailed organization study. I believe that someone should make a study and come up with a recommendation.

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GENERAL WHEELER

At this point the Group returned to General Taylor's office and General Wheeler appeared before the Group.

QUESTION: As the Director of the Joint Staff, how did this operation look to you?

ANSWER: When we got into this in January I put General Gray to work as our representative. Now an interesting aspect was that we attempted to make an evaluation of the plan as it existed at the time we became aware of it and I had J-2 and J-3 make an independent survey to find the optimum landing beach in Cuba, and they came up with Trinidad. Then General Gray, working with a group of officers from all the J Staffs, evaluated the plan, and this evaluation was concluded with the statement that the plan had a fair chance. It was pointed out, however, that our conclusions were based only on hearsay and so we recommended that a team of officers go down to the training area and make an evaluation there. When they returned they wrote their evaluation which indicated several weaknesses, particularly in logistics. As a consequence, we sent Lieutenant Colonel Wall down to help them with their amphibious logistic problems. Thereafter, progressively as the time approached for the implementation of the plan, the plan as originally envisioned was walked away from, particularly the air support aspects. For example, the air strikes were desired on D-Day for maximum effect. The next thing that was bothersome was that we couldn't land at Trinidad as we had to find an airstrip from which the B-26s could claim to be operating. Then came the evaluation of the ZAPATA Plan. If I remember correctly, there were three alternatives to Trinidad that were looked at, and ZAPATA was the least objectionable. I can recall that when he looked at the ZAPATA Plan General Lemnitzer asked how the force would get out of that area in the event that the operation didn't go well. It was explained that the troops would fade into the swamps and move into the mountains. I felt that this had less than a fair chance of success.

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QUESTION: How long did you consider the ZAPATA Plan?

ANSWER: It couldn't have been for more than 48 hours.

QUESTION: Do you think this was time enough to go into the plan adequately?

ANSWER: I believe that you could make a fairly good evaluation in that length of time, or even less. ZAPATA was only a change of the area of landing, not a change of the pattern of the landing.

QUESTION: What about the air plan? Was it really discussed by the Chiefs?

ANSWER: At every meeting there were pros and cons on how important the first air strikes would be and how important it would be to the success of the operation. I feel that the sense of the Chiefs throughout the meetings was that air support was critical to the success of the operation.

QUESTION: When the Chiefs approved the ZAPATA Plan, however, was it with the understanding that there would be pre-D-Day strikes or D-Day strikes?

ANSWER: The matter of the pre-D-Day strike came up after the ZAPATA Plan was more or less set as the plan to be implemented, if I remember correctly. The plan for the ZAPATA landing, as I recall it, still called for the D-Day strike, I think at dawn on D-Day. As I say, I could be wrong on that particular point.

QUESTION: Do you have documents that you can refer to that will establish this time?

ANSWER: Yes, General Gray, I am sure, has these documents.

STATEMENT: The Chiefs were still talking largely in terms of the original plan with the locale moved from Trinidad to ZAPATA.

RESPONSE: That would be more understandable except for the fact that you rejected some of the other alternatives you considered on the basis that they didn't have air strikes.

QUESTION: Did anybody study whether or not the guerrillas could operate in the swamp area?

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ANSWER: I understand that they can, that they have been operating in there for a hundred years.

STATEMENT: This has been referred to, as General Wheeler says. However, I have seen no evidence it has been utilized in recent years.

QUESTION: Did anybody study that?

ANSWER: In that particular area we didn't make any particular study of it, no. We were told this was a guerrilla area and I was under the impression that there were even some guerrillas operating in there at this time.

QUESTION: But nobody in the Joint Staff looked into this matter at the time?

ANSWER: Our people said that this was a guerrilla area and that people could sustain themselves in there.

QUESTION: What I am trying to determine is if a study was made.

ANSWER: No, no study was made, certainly no detailed study.

STATEMENT: We inquired into this on one occasion and the people at CIA told us that a group of a hundred guerrillas were operating in this area, and there was lots of small game.

STATEMENT: Of course, a second point was that while it might have been usable as a guerrilla area at one time, this was before the time of helicopters. It would seem that some of these military experts should have been able to figure this out.

QUESTION: In talking with Colonel Egan, did he point out that the primary evacuation would be by sea, but if this failed they would move into the swamps for their guerrilla operation?

ANSWER: Yes, that was discussed, sir, and it was recognized that this would be a very sticky and difficult thing to do. In the first place, it was recognized that evacuation by sea is one of the most difficult operations there is. You almost have to have support from the sea in the form of gunfire support or air cover. I thought that if these people were really pressed hard the possibility of evacuation would be much less than their going into a guerrilla operation.

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STATEMENT: It would seem that the concept of falling back to the beaches should have been ruled out because it almost ruled out the possibility of guerrilla action as a practical thing.

QUESTION: With regard to the logistics of this thing, would you say that the Joint Staff checked the logistics carefully?

ANSWER: I believe that the logistic aspects were checked very carefully indeed.

QUESTION: As D-Day approached what plans were there for liaison with the CIA?

ANSWER: We set up a little war room here which ran on a 24-hour basis. We had constant liaison with CIA, we had liaison officers from the services, and I had taken people from various sections of the Joint Staff. We had a special communications system where all items from CINCLANT came directly in to General Gray. He was really the disseminator of all messages from the Department of Defense and the other agencies to CINCLANT.

QUESTION: How did you get the messages that came in over at CIA?

ANSWER: They were transmitted over here.

QUESTION: How were they transmitted?

ANSWER: We have a teletype here in J-2.

QUESTION: So you had the same messages here as they had in CIA?

ANSWER: To the best of my belief.

QUESTION: When were you and the Joint Staff aware of the ammunition shortage?

ANSWER: When we got word that the ship that was at Blue Beach was sunk we learned that a large portion of their reserve ammo was aboard, and then we saw messages from the beach area in which they particularly mentioned that they were running low on tank ammunition.

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QUESTION: Once you found out there was an ammunition shortage did you try and get the ships back in there?

ANSWER: Yes, we did.

STATEMENT: I get the impression that a very careful evaluation was made of the Trinidad Plan and that about all that was done in regard to the ZAPATA Plan was that it was looked at with the idea that everything set forth in the Trinidad Plan would go with the exception of the adjustments that had to be made at the new beach.

RESPONSE: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Did you have liaison officers over at CIA?

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: On D-1 they were going to try and make a run into the beach with ammunition. They made an emergency request for air cover. Do you recall whether it was appreciated that this was the only way that they could get that ammunition ashore was with air cover?

ANSWER: Sir, I wouldn't even put it on the basis of ammunition alone. The reports from the beach indicated that the men desperately needed air cover. I definitely knew the situation was desperate at that time, there was no question about it.

STATEMENT: Well, let's move out now and have you tell us how you think you could do this a little bit better in the future.

ANSWER: This is not an original thought. It results from discussions with General Gray and others, and we feel that to properly organize you need to start with a broad national plan prepared by all the agencies of the Government. It should start off in the broad terms of a concept and after the concept is agreed upon and approved by the President each agency should prepare its own part of the plan. We think that in this case CINCLANT should have set up a special operational task force and prepared the detailed plan for the operation. If this plan was prepared, of course, it would be passed up through channels to the President.

QUESTION: How about your other aspects of the plan - the political, the psychological and so on?

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ANSWER: Well, actually these are the special plans that were mentioned earlier with regard to the national plan.

QUESTION: Who would be responsible for success or failure?

ANSWER: The man in charge of the special task force.

STATEMENT: What we really feel is that we lack this national U.S. plan of action. We feel that there should have been a unified task force commander to really conduct the operation. We feel that you cannot efficiently attempt to conduct operations of this sort from Washington. It is too far removed. People are too immersed in other types of activities. What it results in is that responsible officials are called upon to make rather heavy decisions with very little forewarning and in some cases without perhaps as much information as they should have.

Date: MAR 22 2000

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NO OBJECTION TO
CLASSIFICATION: DATE MAR 14 00
JUIRES CONCURRENCE
NSC, State

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*DA - no objection
for 9/1/00*

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IN THIS DOCUMENT

2/7/00, bbb

NSA HAS NO OBJECTION TO THE
DECLASSIFICATION OF THIS
DOCUMENT
2/21/00

NO COMMENT
INTERNAL SECURITY COUNCIL
pmv 5-20-2000

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

PARAMILITARY STUDY GROUP MEETING

AT THE PENTAGON

TENTH MEETING

4 MAY 1961

PRESENT

GENERAL TAYLOR
MR. KENNEDY
MR. DULLES
ADMIRAL BURKE

GENERAL GRAY
GENERAL BONESTEEL
MR. RUSK
COMMANDER MITCHELL
LT COLONEL TARWATER

~~SECRET~~

~~EYES ONLY~~

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CASE # NLK- 98-100
DOCUMENT # 12

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ANSWER: The detailed plan was probably completed on 8 April because that's when Hawkins and Egan went down south. However, we didn't get that plan until the operation started.

QUESTION: General Gray, how close were you to this plan?

ANSWER: I was in on all the meetings that were held at the White House with one exception.

QUESTION: Were you talking with CIA people on this plan?

ANSWER: Yes. The first change we noticed was when the concept changed from being just at the head of the Bay, and moved south down the eastern side to the Blue Beach area.

QUESTION: How did you get that information?

ANSWER: By liaison back and forth between officers. I briefed the JCS on that change in concept at one of their meetings. The reason for this change was because a usable airfield was down on the shoulder and that was one of the requirements that had been placed on the plan.

QUESTION: Was the possibility of this force becoming a guerrilla unit considered?

ANSWER: Not formally by the Joint Chiefs, but we looked at it. It was felt that they could hold this area. However, if they didn't get popular support there was no advantage for them to sit there. For even if Castro couldn't eliminate them, other people couldn't get in to them, so they had to get out of there. It was concluded if they were going to withdraw there were three ways they could do it. One was evacuation by ship. If the decision had been made and planned for we could have withdrawn those people off the beach. The second one was that with air support they could have fought their way out. The third possibility was that part of the force would be evacuated and then later infiltrated back in as guerrillas and the other part of the force would actually remain in that whole Zapata Peninsula area and operate as guerrillas in the expanse to the west. It was always believed they could get out by sea because the CIA's sea operations had always been very successful.

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QUESTION: Were you aware that the troops were trained and instructed that in the event they couldn't hold their lodgment they were to fall back onto the beaches for evacuation, and only if that failed would they operate as guerrilla forces?

ANSWER: No, we weren't. That wasn't in the plan and we were not present at the final briefing.

QUESTION: Did you brief the Joint Chiefs on all the parts of the plan?

ANSWER: Yes, all except the question of the air strikes.

QUESTION: What was your understanding of the air strikes?

ANSWER: There would be air strikes on D-Day. This D-2 air strike didn't come in until the last few days. The air plan consisted of nothing but D-Day strikes. Our understanding of the plan was always that the air strikes would be conducted at dawn from Puerto Cabezas.

QUESTION: Would you look back in your notes and see when you briefed the Chiefs and essentially what was in your briefing so we'll know what they heard about the plan?

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

STATEMENT: There were four official papers that the Joint Chiefs considered. The first was the original Trinidad Plan. The Second was the Zapata Evaluation. Third was the evaluation of whether or not we could put a small force in the Oriente Province and they could hang on, and fourth was the evaluation of the team's trip to Guatemala. They were briefed on these official papers and at their regular meetings I brought them up to date on what was going on. At several of these meetings they were briefed on changes to the plan and they approved them.

QUESTION: Were these briefings for information or to get their decision?

ANSWER: Generally speaking, when I briefed them it was on some paper or something that they were being asked to approve.

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QUESTION: Would you say then that the Chiefs did have all the essential elements of this plan and did consider the plan adequate?

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Did you feel you had the option to the guerrilla alternative?

ANSWER: Yes, I've always thought we had the option to make that decision before the force got pressed right down to the beach.

GENERAL GRAY: As D-Day approached it seemed to me that popular support was developing and building. We did measure all the military factors we thought were necessary. However, it was very difficult to get an accurate fix on where the militia was.

QUESTION: You and the DOD did consider the logistic problem and took action to strengthen the logistic plan. Is that a fair statement?

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

STATEMENT: In other words, logistically speaking, you had planned a very heavy back up to insure a successful operation.

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Would you say that you saw this plan develop, that you had adequate contact with the CIA so that your group, at least, had full knowledge of the developments and anything that looked doubtful was taken before the Joint Chiefs?

ANSWER: That's right.

QUESTION: Is it true that while the Joint Chiefs never had a presentation on the over-all Zapata Plan at one time, they were briefed on all the pieces of the plan, so they could be said to have knowledge of the entire plan?

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: What concern was expressed over the fact that there were only small boats to unload the HUSTON off Red Beach?

ANSWER: I actually didn't know that detail.

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QUESTION: Did you know that the ATLANTICO and the CARIBE had gone south a hundred or two hundred miles and actually escaped from control for a number of hours?

ANSWER: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Do you recall when you discovered that?

ANSWER: It's in our log. As soon as we became aware of it we told CINCLANT to round them up.

STATEMENT: Our position on all of this was that we would do anything as long as it was approved, and then CIA carried the ball on getting the approval.

GENERAL TAYLOR: After listening to General Gray's testimony I now feel that the Joint Chiefs had a more complete appraisal of the plan and consequently gave a more complete approval.

GENERAL GRAY: I believe there should have been a final briefing on the over-all plan about April 12th. I wrote that into the tasks that were to be followed by the different agencies. I believe this would have permitted a more detailed evaluation of the plan and all the changes that had been made up to that point.

GENERAL GRAY: Speaking for myself, there could have been a more detailed evaluation, but I don't think it would have changed my evaluation that the plans should have gone ahead.

GENERAL BONESTEEL

At this point General Gray left and General Bonesteel appeared before the Group.

QUESTION: How can we better cope with the cold war problem?

ANSWER: It is essential that we have a cold war indications center where all the traffic of messages and intelligence from all the departments would come into a central area which is organized and staffed to keep an eye on what is happening throughout the world in order to flag situations on which it may be necessary to take action. This institution needs to be staffed by people from the State Department, the military and intelligence communities.

QUESTION: Would this group make plans?

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ANSWER: It could if expanded to this. However, its primary purpose would be to call attention to situations that might require some kind of action.

QUESTION: Isn't this the State Department's area of responsibility?

ANSWER: Possibly, but it wouldn't work as well under the State Department as it would if the various agency representatives worked as coequals.

STATEMENT: The reason this sort of center is necessary is because of schizophrenia. The DOD probably believes that power is the final criteria of Communist success, whereas in the State Department there are probably only a half dozen people that understand the requirements for power. Furthermore, you can't get the State Department to plan on the use of power in any future operations. Actually you have no one place to get the proper interagency coordination on cold war matters.

QUESTION: The NSC was organized for this purpose, wasn't it?

ANSWER: Yes, sir. The NSC is a mechanism for doing this. However, it has no staff except stenographic.

QUESTION: Are you suggesting that if the NSC was reorganized they could do this?

ANSWER: No, I would in fact revise the NSC.

QUESTION: Who would spark off the actions that needed to be taken throughout the world?

ANSWER: The cold war indications center.

QUESTION: Where would be the central place that the plan would be developed?

ANSWER: Under NSC auspices.

- 6 -
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SECRETARY RUSK

(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

At this point the Study Group reconvened in Secretary Rusk's office in the State Department. Present were:

GENERAL TAYLOR

SECRETARY RUSK

MR. KENNEDY

COMMANDER MITCHELL

MR. DULLES

LT COLONEL TARWATER

After a few introductory remarks Secretary Rusk was asked his estimate of the probability of success of the Zapata Plan.

SECRETARY RUSK: It was in the neighborhood of fifty per cent. It appeared the landing might be followed by further uprisings. If this failed the force could become guerrillas.

MR. DULLES: I think we all looked upon this as a pretty risky operation.

SECRETARY RUSK: The risks of the operation were accepted, however, because the importance of success was fully appreciated. Time was running out. It was the last chance in some time to have this job done by Cubans. Otherwise we might have to do this with American personnel and this would be less desirable. Castro's police power was increasing and he was also receiving a large inflow of Soviet arms. Further, it should be pointed out that when we talked about the possibility of failure we talked about far more disastrous results than actually occurred. For example, we had discussed the possibility of such things as being ousted from the OAS or censure by the UN, and lively and adverse reaction by our allies in Europe. The results that developed were not as serious as those that we had considered.

QUESTION: What was the feeling of the likelihood of a popular uprising following the landing?

SECRETARY RUSK: There was a very considerable likelihood of popular uprisings.

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QUESTION: How essential was such an uprising regarded for the success of the operation?

SECRETARY RUSK: It was believed that the uprising was utterly essential to success in terms of ousting Castro. At one point we discussed the possibility of putting these men in as guerrillas. However, this concept was rejected on the basis of the fact that it would not spark an uprising.

QUESTION: What was your understanding of the requirements for sufficient shock to spark uprisings?

SECRETARY RUSK: The impression existed that 1,200 highly trained men expected to get ashore and run into some militia units and beat the hell out of them. This would be the kind of a bloody nose that would get things moving. The feeling was that there would be no fighting on the beach. It seemed that this area was virtually empty. There was a good chance the invasion force could get well ashore without being discovered.

QUESTION: What was expected to happen if the landing force effected a successful lodgment but there was no uprising?

SECRETARY RUSK: In that case they would commence guerrilla operations, move into the swamps and then into the hills. This swamp area was stated to be the home of guerrillas.

QUESTION: Was the point made that this area had not been used for guerrilla operations in this century?

SECRETARY RUSK: I don't recall.

QUESTION: Was the possibility of a sea evacuation of the force considered?

SECRETARY RUSK: I don't recall. At least, it didn't make an impression on me. Let me point out that there was a minimum of papers.

QUESTION: What was the understanding of the position of the JCS as to Zapata? Was it appreciated that they favored Trinidad over Zapata?

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SECRETARY RUSK: They approved the Trinidad Plan. Trinidad involved a larger scale, more spectacular operation. It didn't offer the immediate possibility of an airstrip. It was felt that Zapata had considerably more political advantages and that the JCS approved Zapata.

STATEMENT: The JCS commented that Zapata was the best of the three alternatives they considered, but that they still favored the original Trinidad Plan.

SECRETARY RUSK: They didn't put their view in writing and that didn't come through. There was a strong impression that they favored the plan. At one meeting the President went around the room and asked everyone personally their opinion and I believe that I was the only one that didn't approve.

QUESTION: Was it understood that control of the air was considered essential to the success of the landing?

SECRETARY RUSK: Yes, it was understood that it was essential to the success of the landing, but there was an inadequate appreciation of the enemy's capability in the air. Furthermore, neither the President nor I was clear that there was a D-2 air strike. We did have it in our minds that there would be a D-Day air strike. Following the D-2 air strike there was considerable confusion. It wasn't realized that there was to be more than one air strike in the Havana area. The President was called on this matter and he didn't think there should be second strikes in the area unless there were overriding considerations. We talked about the relative importance of the air strikes with Mr. Bissell and General Cabell at the time. However, they indicated that the air strikes would be important, but not critical. I offered to let them call the President, but they indicated they didn't think the matter was that important. They said that they preferred not to call the President.

QUESTION: Did you attempt to advise the President as to the importance of the air strikes?

SECRETARY RUSK: I had talked to him and he had stated that if there weren't overriding considerations the second strikes shouldn't

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be made. Since Mr. Bissell and General Cabell didn't want to talk to the President on the matter, I felt there were no overriding considerations to advise him of. I didn't think they believed the dawn air strikes were too important. I believe that Castro turned out to have more operational air strength than we figured.

MR. DULLES: I don't believe they had any more. However, they turned out to be more efficient.

QUESTION: Do you recall why the question of air strikes was withheld until Sunday evening?

SECRETARY RUSK: As far as I was concerned, I was caught by surprise with the first air strikes. I was trying to advise Adlai Stevenson at the UN on what was happening and suddenly found out there were additional air strikes coming up. We didn't want him to have to lie to the UN.

QUESTION: What was the understanding of the ability of the landing force to pass to a guerrilla status in an emergency?

SECRETARY RUSK: The impression was that the ability of this force to pass to guerrilla activities presented no difficulty. At the beginning of the second day the President and I discussed the question of whether it was time to move the force out as guerrillas. However, it appears there was a delay in turning to this because they didn't have this action in mind.

GENERAL TAYLOR: They were told to fall back to the beaches so that they could be evacuated from the sea.

SECRETARY RUSK: Guerrilla actions were regarded as far more feasible than they turned out to be. I do regret, however, that consideration was not given to another alternative. I suggested earlier that they land in the eastern portion of Cuba and then get a position with Guantanamo behind them. However, our military friends didn't want to spoil the virginity of Guantanamo.

QUESTION: What was the understanding of the ammunition situation at the end of April 18? Was the importance of air cover for the returning ammunition ships understood?

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SECRETARY RUSK: It was apparent that it was critical. The requirement for air cover wasn't as apparent as for air drops and getting the ships back in there, particularly in regard to getting them some tank ammunition.

QUESTION: Was it known at your level that two of the ammunition ships had taken off from the beach area and kept going south?

SECRETARY RUSK: No.

QUESTION: What degree of nonattribution was sought and why? Were the operational disadvantages arising from some of the restrictions imposed by the efforts to achieve nonattribution clearly presented and understood?

SECRETARY RUSK: We were hoping for the maximum. In retrospect, however, this looks a little naive. The considerations involved in this were that if you have success all the problems solve themselves. However, if you have failure it's very nice if the United States is not involved.

STATEMENT: Of course, there are degrees of nonattribution. The most costly restriction was the requirement not to have the air strikes even by Cubans *which were not out of Cuba. not*

SECRETARY RUSK: What we talked about was having at least one or two aircraft touch their wheels on the captured airstrip in order to support the thesis that the aircraft were operating from within Cuba. As you recall, this was a "blown" operation and it wasn't desirable to put Guatemala and Nicaragua in an impossible position by operating the aircraft from their countries. Consequently, if it could be made to appear that these aircraft were operating from within Cuba it would have been desirable.

SECRETARY RUSK: Incidentally, it would be well to find out how much the Cubans knew about this operation in advance because the Russian representative was teasing Mr. Stevenson about when he was going to begin to talk about Cuba and the Cuban representative was supposed to have been sick. However, he recovered almost immediately when Cuba was attacked. We may find that they knew more about this operation than we believe.

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QUESTION: To what extent did the CIA operations representatives have to "sell" the operation to the other agencies of government?

SECRETARY RUSK: You have to draw a distinction between the policy side and the operational side. The policy side we were willing to look at, if it was policy. On the operational side, we were oversold on the operational aspects.

QUESTION: What do you mean by oversold on the operational aspects?

// SECRETARY RUSK: It was presented in too optimistic terms.

QUESTION: Do you have any remarks on the integrated planning and coordination?

// SECRETARY RUSK: This is very important. These covert matters are handled on such a restricted basis that the resources of the departments are not brought to bear.

SECRETARY RUSK: When you go beyond a few people in an operation of this sort it shouldn't be handled by the CIA.

QUESTION: What didn't we do that we should have?

SECRETARY RUSK: Before the President made his decision, CIA and Defense should have spelled out the entire CIA plan in one presentation. While the President had all the factors in his mind, I think this would have helped.

SECRETARY RUSK: Furthermore, we overemphasized some of the factors. For example, the question of what to do with this 1,200-man force. This question played too large a role because we certainly should have been able to handle these 1,200 men.

SECRETARY RUSK: If you are not prepared to go all the way you shouldn't put 1,200 men ashore.

SECRETARY RUSK: When you get to the final decision stage the room should be cleared of all but those that have formal constitutional responsibility. People looking down the cannon's mouth should be in a solemn position and make a solemn decision without having large numbers of people in the room.

STATEMENT: Mr. McNamara stressed the desirability of having written papers and decisions.

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SECRETARY RUSK: That would have been helpful. However, it would have meant 50 or 60 pieces of paper around this town.

SECRETARY RUSK: One concluding remark. There was no one involved that didn't recognize this was a risky business and that failure would be costly. However, we overestimated the international effects of failure, and underestimated the effects of failure on this town.

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for 4/15/00

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

CONVERSATION BETWEEN GENERAL TAYLOR AND MR. THORSRUD

AT THE PENTAGON

6 MAY 1961

PRESENT

GENERAL TAYLOR

MR. THORSRUD

LT COLONEL TARWATER

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(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

Mr. Garfield Thorstved was the Tactical Air Commander at Puerto Cabezas.

GARFIELD THORSTVED

QUESTION: Would you explain how the air operation was organized. As I understand it, there were two organizations - one for planning and one for execution.

ANSWER: That's right.

QUESTION: Were you the actual air commander?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: When did the pre-D-Day strikes come into the picture?

ANSWER: I'm not sure.

STATEMENT: Will you ask Colonel Beerli to come over on Monday and set forth the facts relating to the pre-D-Day air strikes.

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: What was the turn-around time for your aircraft?

ANSWER: The longest time was three hours. A normal combat loading took approximately an hour.

QUESTION: How long could you remain over the target?

ANSWER: Thirty minutes to an hour.

QUESTION: What was your capability for providing air cover to the beach?

ANSWER: We could keep someone over there all the time. On D-Day we had a capability for launching 20 sorties. If we hadn't lost some of our air crews to enemy air action, we'd have been able to maintain this indefinitely.

QUESTION: That would have been a major effort?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: How many strikes were conducted against the air fields?

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ANSWER: The D-2 air strikes of eight B-26s against three airfields. On the nights of 17 and 18 April three B-26s were scheduled against San Antonio de los Banos. Two of these aborted, one arrived over the target, but due to haze and a blackout he was unable to identify his target. In the early morning hours of 18 April three more aircraft were dispatched against San Antonio de los Banos. One aborted on take-off, two aircraft arrived over target, but due to scud and haze in the area, they couldn't locate the target.

STATEMENT: After the D-2 air strikes, we knew that we hadn't destroyed all the aircraft. Consequently, we requested permission to launch air strikes against the remaining targets on D-1.

QUESTION: How was the request for the D-1 air strike handled?

ANSWER: It was not approved by Washington.

QUESTION: When were you denied permission to use napalm?

ANSWER: We only had standing authority to use napalm against a tank farm. We had to request authority on all other targets.

QUESTION: When did the pilot fatigue show up?

ANSWER: 171030Z.

QUESTION: Was this really fatigue?

ANSWER: Yes. In 14 out of 17 cases; the other three pilots just didn't have it.

QUESTION: How many B-26 pilots did you have?

ANSWER: Seventeen Cuban and eight American. Twenty-five all together.

QUESTION: What do you think about the adequacy of the number of pilots?

ANSWER: It was enough.

QUESTION: Did you have enough pilots to fly over the beach with two aircraft at all times?

ANSWER: Yes. There was a 4,100 foot strip in the beachhead area and we had crews qualified to operate from this strip.

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QUESTION: If the invasion had been successful enough to keep the artillery off, you would have been successful?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: What was your understanding on the use of contract pilots?

ANSWER: We didn't have blanket authority to use them, but we did have the authority to hire and train them and put them on a standby status. Later the use of contract pilots, in the beachhead area only, was approved by Washington.

QUESTION: Who handled your messages in Washington?

ANSWER: Colonel Gaines and Colonel Beerli.

QUESTION: Were you surprised at the effectiveness of the T-33s?

ANSWER: I've flown T-33s - they're a good airplane. We weren't surprised at their capabilities once they were airborne.

QUESTION: How would you summarize your feelings with regard to the operation and the lessons to be learned?

ANSWER: Policy decisions above the agency denied us the right to go ahead as scheduled and planned.

QUESTION: Was there some confusion as to the time the Navy air CAP was to be provided?

ANSWER: There was no confusion of the time. I received a message that Navy air CAP would be provided.

QUESTION: Would you provide us with a copy of the message?

ANSWER: Yes.

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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

PARAMILITARY STUDY GROUP MEETING

NO DIA objection.
for 7/17/00

AT THE PENTAGON

TWELFTH MEETING

8 MAY 1961

PRESENT

GENERAL TAYLOR
MR. KENNEDY
MR. DULLES
ADMIRAL BURKE

GENERAL WHITE
GENERAL DECKER
GENERAL SHOUP
MR. BISSELL
COLONEL BLACK
COLONEL GAINES
COLONEL KING
COMMANDER MITCHELL
MR. COX
MR. SMITH
LT COLONEL TARNWATER

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(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

COLONEL BLACK

The first person to appear before the Group was Colonel Black. Colonel Black said he is currently Assistant to Mr. Gilpatric.

QUESTION: Is Mr. Gilpatric heading a task group on clandestine warfare at this time?

COLONEL BLACK: He's the head of a Presidential task force trying to develop a paper on Viet Nam. It is not a generalized consideration of paramilitary operations; it's just restricted to Viet Nam.

QUESTION: Were you involved at all in the Cuba operations?

COLONEL BLACK: No, sir.

COLONEL BLACK: It might be useful, however, if I told you, first, to what extent the Secretary's Office had been involved in the Cuba operation and, second, to go on with some brief ideas of my own as to the lessons to be learned from this particular exercise, if that would be of any help.

COLONEL BLACK: Mr. Gilpatric was involved in the Cuba operation through his Thursday meetings of the 5412 Group. However, as far as this particular operation was concerned, Mr. Gilpatric did not have much direct responsibility.

QUESTION: Who's the Chairman of the 5412 Group?

MR. DULLES: We don't have a Chairman. I am the action officer. I handle the proposals for action by the CIA and they are approved, disapproved, or referred for further study.

QUESTION: The 5412 Committee is under the NSC. Is that right?

MR. DULLES: It's under the President, I would say. It was formed under that document, NSC 5412, but the practical working out of the Committee was under the President. The President often wanted the covert operations presented to him in a smaller group than the full NSC meeting.

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QUESTION: Then this Group would take any new proposals to the President direct?

MR. DULLES: If it was of the consequence that the Secretary of State or Gordon Gray thought it should go to the President. Often we would pass on an operation without going to the President.

COLONEL BLACK: That's about all I can contribute to the actual Cuba exercise, as such. I should say also that I am speaking for myself, Colonel Black. I haven't checked this out with my boss. It seems to me that the principal lessons are these: First, we can't do it with mirrors; I have a feeling that we are trying to do very significant things in the struggle against the Communist power without really going all the way. We are trying to do it with some trick or gimmick. Second, I don't think personally from my work here in Washington that the United States fully understands how to use the power which we have at our disposal, that's political, military, and economic. Third, I don't think we have yet the interdepartmental structure to fight the cold war. Fourth, I think we seriously need action to halt the erosion of America's will to win. I don't think we really go into the battle against Communism to win. We go in there to hold our own and this, in turn, has a very bad effect on all our policies, on the morale of our people. Finally, I have some criteria for solution of the problem which is just basic criteria. I have them written up for your four members.

QUESTION: You mention your opinion of the inadequacy of the Governmental structure. Do you have specific suggestions?

COLONEL BLACK: We need a National Security Operations Center. This should be right in the White House. In my judgment, it can't be anywhere else. The State Department is setting up an operation center, and I'm sure the State Department will claim that any interdepartmental organization such as this should be in the State Department. I'm convinced, both from what I've seen in the field and in Washington, that you cannot effectively conduct these national security operations under the sole leadership of the State Department.

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The classic example, in my judgment, is South Viet Nam. The President, on the 20th of April, asked Mr. Gilpatrick to head up a Presidential task force to try to develop a program to prevent the Communist domination of Viet Nam. It soon became apparent that the problem as the Department of State saw it was one of maintaining the primacy of State in the control of all operations overseas, rather than really focussing on the problem of defeating the Communist effort in South Viet Nam.

QUESTION: You say they are reluctant to work towards success?

COLONEL BLACK: They spend most of their time trying to make sure that the Government decision-making authority and control will be in the State Department. They went right back to their old principle that the first and essential element of the Viet Nam problem is to reform Diem; reform his government, and giving that priority over defeating the Communists. Defense has always felt that primary emphasis must be placed on finding a solution to the internal security problem, and to do that the reform of the Diem government would have to wait until you had established a reasonable degree of internal security. The State Department wants to make any additional military effort to improve the internal security program sort of a quid pro quo for instituting these internal reforms. The basic point is that the direction of this sort of thing has to be on the basis of national security rather than on foreign policy.

QUESTION: You say then that such a center should be in the White House and not in the State Department?

COLONEL BLACK: That's right. I have here a paper that sets forth the concept, and a longer paper that sets forth some argumentation.

QUESTION: When you say a center, do you mean a committee?

COLONEL BLACK: No, sir.

QUESTION: Who's in charge?

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COLONEL BLACK: The President. It has to be close at hand to the White House so that he can use it whenever he wants, but it should be manned by professionals from all departments and agencies of the Government.

QUESTION: Is it simply to provide information and intelligence and that sort of thing, or is it to be an action group that checks on things and starts interdepartmental work and so on?

COLONEL BLACK: First, it gives the President up-to-the-minute intelligence; secondly, it gives him communication with which he can personally communicate to his ambassadors and to his field commanders all over the world, and it keeps him abreast of the status of approved projects and programs that have been started in the Government. It gives him, in effect, a mechanism for command supervision which I don't think he has today.

QUESTION: I don't see how he'd accomplish that.

COLONEL BLACK: In effect, he could determine from the information available in the center whether we're making any progress toward our objectives or not.

STATEMENT: Gilpatric's task force on Viet Nam seems to be symptomatic of our weakness. The present consensus is the need to pull these things together and to get a program and to follow up on it, but now they're using ad hoc methods with a task force committee limiting their scope to one particular country which can't be considered by itself, in my opinion. The question in my mind is should there be some machinery on some permanent basis whereby you have this machinery essentially, State, CIA, and Defense, and a sort of permanent committee with broader responsibilities, in a sense like the 5412 Committee, but with broader responsibilities, not just to consider covert operations but all cold war operations.

MR. DULLES: Then you have another task force with Mr. Nitze on Cuba, another one on Iran under the State Department, and there was a fourth one under the State Department.

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STATEMENT: Well, isn't that hopeless confusion? Doesn't it suggest that the President senses a need for the ability to pull things together and look to one place for some order? I would say that he would need a permanent setup of the 5412 type. Your command post would be an essential part of this, but it would be just one aspect of this.

RESPONSE: If you put it in the White House, it means in the Old State Department Building and then you have a medley of problems such as security, and so on, and I think you should give the President a cushion. If you have the President sending out uncoordinated messages to Ambassadors all over the world, you're going to have chaos.

STATEMENT: These are practical questions that have to be solved.

MR. DULLES: Something of this kind should be established and the State Department, when they get the right men, ought to share in it.

COLONEL BLACK: The way they get around the interdepartmental problem is to have representatives of the departments in the command post as working members. They're not going to be representing their departments, they're going to be working for the President, but they would keep their departments informed and they know where to get information, and so forth.

GENERAL TAYLOR: We are facing the same problem in an international area that we faced in Defense; namely, the concept has now been abandoned by the Army, Navy, and Air Force, that the departments per se can go out and fight wars. The people who do go out and fight wars are a task force. I think we are faced with that in international relations. The State Department has developed people with certain skills, as has CIA and Defense. There ought to be something in the economic field, where you have that component well represented. Then the Ambassador sits on top of this group and

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reports back to the President. Now we haven't got to this, but isn't this the concept?

MR. DULLES: Yes, and the Ambassador reports back to the President and not to the State Department, and your economic capability ought to tie right in.

QUESTION: To whom do you look at the present time for that kind of economic warfare advice?

MR. DULLES: Mr. Ball. But we've never had since the war any office that looked upon the economic thing as a weapon to defeat someone.

STATEMENT: Well, I think we ought to take this paper and read it over and possibly have another session on the matter.

COLONEL BLACK: I would just like to make one point before I leave and I think it is an important one. This is the difference in thinking between State and Defense. State tends to be reluctant to apply national power, particularly military power, during its conduct of diplomacy because of the fear of complicating the strictly political and psychological situations. Elements in State have gotten to the point where they think that power is basically an immoral thing and the application of power in any form is an immoral act, and this is not true. It depends on whether or not you use power to preserve peace or use it for an immoral purpose.

STATEMENT: I think that it's important that the President have representatives of both points of view, so that neither one would have freedom to dominate.

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(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

GENERAL SHOUP

QUESTION: What action was taken on the over-all U.S. plan of action for Cuba developed by the JCS in late January?

GENERAL SHOUP: It was considered by the JCS, but I don't know to whom it was distributed nor what action was taken on it.

GENERAL TAYLOR: At no time after January was there any reconsideration by the JCS of the need for that kind of paper to pull the whole thing together?

GENERAL SHOUP: To my knowledge there was no reference to it by the Chiefs, but what the Chairman might have done I don't know.

QUESTION: What was the JCS view of the military feasibility of TRINIDAD and ZAPATA?

GENERAL SHOUP: Only by having an opportunity to give my feelings on this whole operation can my observations be taken in the proper context. When I first learned that something of this nature was happening as a military man it immediately dawned on me that this was a whole lot more than dropping a few parachutists or running a boat in at a few various places along the island. I went through the NSC papers and discovered that the national policy was the overthrow of the Castro regime. CIA then drew up the TRINIDAD Plan and asked that the Joint Chiefs and the Joint Staff evaluate it from a military feasibility standpoint. This led to a very careful look at the mission. The mission had nothing to do with the armed forces of Cuba or the militia, with the exception of that necessary to enter Cuba. The personnel of this force were being better trained than the ordinary Cubans. Their task was to get ashore with this tremendous amount of equipment and supplies which was to be made available for distribution to the people who would rise up to assist the operation. They had considered time and space factors available to them, and determined that this organization had sufficient time to get in there, get the materials ashore, and distribute them to the dissidents. The intelligence indicated that there were quite a number of people that were ready to join in the fight against

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Castro. These people were to come into the beachhead and pick up this material, and then the beachhead would expand and they would very soon have a formidable military organization. Considering this plan and the location of the enemy forces on the basis of the time and space factors, it appeared to me that they could accomplish their objective. Sometime later the Chairman said the President would not approve the TRINIDAD Plan because it smacked too much of Normandy, which would make it impossible to deny U.S. involvement. Consequently CIA was directed to develop some alternatives. Later Gen. Gray came in and briefed us on some alternate plans and, as I understood it, there was no question about the Trinidad thing. It was out right there as far as doing it in its original form. A new requirement was levied on CIA to make their landing where there was an airfield. It was my personal feeling that the airfield requirement virtually restricted the operation to the Zapata region. The JCS decided that there was no question about it, the Zapata area had the greatest possibility of success of the alternatives we were considering. Following this there was considerable discussion about how many aircraft Castro had, and the best way to eliminate the tanks. There seemed to be no question about being able to destroy Castro's aircraft with napalm, strafing and rockets, nor the ability to disrupt the tanks. That brings us to the place where the decision was made to go in and try the Zapata thing. However, one thought was predominate. You must achieve and maintain air superiority or you are not going to be able to get ashore.

QUESTION: Did you feel that Zapata was as good a plan as Trinidad?

GENERAL SHOUR: No, sir. I questioned the swamp area. However, after considerable thought and discussion, I was satisfied that by dropping parachutists to block the roads and by using anti-tank mines you could accomplish the same objectives in the Zapata area that you could in the Trinidad area. However, there were complications in the distances the people would have to come to get the weapons, the problem of maneuvering would be more difficult, and the possibility of debouching would also be more difficult from the Zapata area.

QUESTION: There was no civilian population in the area at all, was there?

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GENERAL SHOUP: There were about 1,800 people where the landings were made.

QUESTION: You made the point that one of the essential parts of the TRINIDAD Plan was the fact that they had a population there on which they could base their expansion. Did you consider that possibility existed in Zapata?

GENERAL SHOUP: Yes, sir. The idea was that time and space factors were favorable. It was my understanding that there were lots of people just waiting for these arms, that they would get them in the same manner as they would have in the TRINIDAD Plan. However, you were closer to some of Castro's army forces and tank forces and you would have more difficulty debouching from this area.

QUESTION: Did you visualize that this landing would attract sizable Castro forces?

GENERAL SHOUP: Obviously, once he determined the location of the main invasion, Castro was bound to bring in his forces.

QUESTION: How were the dissident Cuban civilians going to get their arms then?

GENERAL SHOUP: The parachutists and anti-tank mines would block the roadways. Then the whole area would be in a state of revolt. There would be no problem of them coming through. These people would have been much closer to their source of arms than the enemy, because the enemy didn't know where they were coming in.

QUESTION: Was there any impression that there was going to be a pre-D-Day message to the population?

GENERAL SHOUP: My understanding was that the possibilities of uprisings were increasing, that people were just waiting for these arms and equipment, and as soon as they heard where the invasion was that they would be coming after them.

QUESTION: If you were in charge of the defenses in this area couldn't you get some artillery in and really give them hell?

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GENERAL SHOUP: It takes time. It's time and space. I didn't conceive of them stashing all this stuff on one spot on the beach and waiting until somebody brings artillery down.

QUESTION: What was your opinion of what they were going to do? Get these arms out of there?

GENERAL SHOUP: Right. And there would be people there to assist them and get the arms. This force, from my understanding, was highly trained in comparison with the militia. They had proper arms, equipment, and leadership to enable them to stand off the armed forces they could expect Castro to commit against them.

QUESTION: How long did you think they'd be in the Bay?

GENERAL SHOUP: One day. I thought they'd unload those ships and get out of there. If they didn't get unloaded, they'd come back after dark, depending upon whether they were actually rushed by the enemy or if they weren't, and depending upon where the people were that could use the arms.

QUESTION: Was it your understanding that a lot of people in this area were going to come in and help?

GENERAL SHOUP: I certainly thought there was going to be a number of them. We weren't just talking about the people that had homes in this area. We were talking about the people who wanted to get the help they knew was coming to them with this landing force.

GENERAL SHOUP: I didn't think the militia were going to band together and harm this thing. It would take some elements of the organized force and if the actual time and place of the landing was not known, the enemy could not afford to commit all of his forces because he doesn't know where the main thrust will be. It was my opinion that the arms and ammunition they had with them was nowhere near sufficient for the people that wanted them.

QUESTION: The JCS commenting on Trinidad said that it had a fair chance of success. Then I think that the record shows that they viewed the next alternatives and said that Zapata was the best of these three plans, but that they still preferred Trinidad.

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GENERAL SHOUP: Yes, sir, any corporal would have said that.

QUESTION: The Chief ^{apparently} rated the chances of success for Zapata as something less than fair. What was your appraisal of the chances of success of this operation?

GENERAL SHOUP: The plan they had should have accomplished the mission in Zapata, if the plan had been brought to fruition.

QUESTION: You did not expect a quick or strong reaction from the Castro forces?

GENERAL SHOUP: I expected them to react, but not with some of the equipment with which they did react, and I don't think they would have if the plans had been carried out.

QUESTION: As you saw this plan develop, the amphibious landing on a hostile shore, did you have any misgivings?

GENERAL SHOUP: I very frankly made this statement, if this kind of an operation can be done with this kind of a force with this much training and knowledge about it, then we are wasting our time in our divisions, we ought to go on leave for three months out of four.

MR. DULLES: Do you realize how many military men we had on this task force? Some of your very best officers. We took a great deal of responsibility, but we called on the Defense Department and I looked to them for military judgments. I didn't look to our people for military judgments.

QUESTION: General Shoup, isn't that statement of yours somewhat in contradiction with your over-all optimism that this plan would work?

GENERAL SHOUP: No, sir, it is not.

QUESTION: Would you say that you took the same interest in this operation and made the same personal analysis as you would have done had you been in charge?

GENERAL SHOUP: I'll say this. I spent a lot of sleepless hours over this because I worried about the thing because there was no plan for helping these men if there was something unforeseen, an act of God or something, that prevented a successful landing. In my opinion there would be no way to save

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them. There was no way to guarantee its success, but if the plan was executed, as planned, I believe it would have been successful. I couldn't find out all I wanted to about the plan. I knew I wasn't supposed to. It wasn't my responsibility. Had I been completely responsible I think I would have known about everything. There were only four people in my headquarters that knew anything about the plan.

STATEMENT: Let's go back to this question of military responsibility. Certainly you, as Commandant of the Marine Corps, had no responsibility for it, but as a member of the Joint Chiefs you did have responsibility for this operation.

GENERAL SHoup: That's not my understanding.

STATEMENT: At least the JCS as a corporate body had responsibility for this operation.

GENERAL SHoup: That's not my understanding, only insofar as the Commander in Chief might want to know something about the adequacy of the plan, or the probability of success. Otherwise I don't feel that I or the other Joint Chiefs had any responsibility for the success of this plan.

QUESTION: The Joint Chiefs are by law the advisors to the Secretary of Defense, National Security Council, and the President. Consequently, would you say that you should volunteer any advice on this subject?

GENERAL SHoup: As a member of the Joint Chiefs I don't know what the Chairman did. I don't know what happened at a lot of meetings at the White House or the State Department but I do know this, that within the corporate body I for one emphasized time after time that we had to have air superiority and we had to help this outfit fend off the force they were going to have opposing them down there.

ADMIRAL BURKE: There are three or four things that are the basis of this thing that ought to be clear. One is the responsibility of the Chiefs to comment on the plan. Another is the actual conduct of the operation, which was all in one place and that was in CIA.

MR. DULLES: But that was done by military personnel.

ADMIRAL BURKE: But not under our command structure.

STATEMENT: But as advisors to the President the JCS had a responsibility. The President had the right to look to the Joint Chiefs for advice during the planning or execution phase if they thought they had something important to offer.

GENERAL SHoup: That's true, as limited by their knowledge of all aspects of the plan.

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STATEMENT: And in the absence of hearing from the Chiefs he had a right to assume that everything was going satisfactorily.

GENERAL SHOUP: Yes, to the limit of our knowledge. I want to tell you this right now. Had I as an individual heard that they were going to call off the air strikes I'd have asked that the Commander in Chief be informed. I'd have called him myself because it was absolutely essential to success. The D-2 affair was only a half effort.

MR. DULLES: General, may I add this. The D-2 Day was essentially a plot, not a plan. The plan was the D-Day strike.

QUESTION: Do you feel that you had absolute and complete knowledge about this operation?

GENERAL SHOUP: Absolutely not.

QUESTION: Did you understand that the President and his advisors were looking to you for your military evaluation of this plan?

GENERAL SHOUP: The thing that we were asked to do was to determine which of the three alternatives was the best.

QUESTION: But then after that, did you understand that during that period of time that the President was looking to you, the JCS, for the military evaluation of the operation?

GENERAL SHOUP: I would have to presume that in accordance with his title as Commander in Chief he would be thinking about the military part.

QUESTION: But you understand that he wanted to get your advice and ideas also?

GENERAL SHOUP: That was never stated.

QUESTION: What I am getting at is that if you feel that you didn't have full knowledge and information on the plan and at the same time the President was looking to you for advice, it seems to me it would be almost impossible for you to give him the military evaluation.

GENERAL SHOUP: Well, you had to look at it in the context of what the agency said about the uprisings. I had no possible way to know or evaluate them. That in itself was a particularly important factor.

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STATEMENT: There was a general impression that the Joint Chiefs of Staff had approved this operation. I don't think there is any doubt but what they went ahead thinking that you and the other Joint Chiefs had approved the plan, but you now say that you didn't have full knowledge and information in order to evaluate the plan. That in itself is of some significance for the future.

GENERAL SHOUP: One of the main features relating to the ultimate success of this was not whether you could put these ships in here and unload this military equipment, whether the people were properly trained to fend off a reasonable enemy effort.

STATEMENT: Your idea of the plan is entirely different from some other peoples' idea of the plan.

GENERAL SHOUP: I'm telling the truth as I know it.

STATEMENT: I don't think there is any doubt about that.

STATEMENT: The idea that the people would land on the beach and then take off into the swamp is a new one to us.

ADMIRAL BURKE: There was great emphasis on the uprisings and we spent hours and hours determining how to get additional equipment. We ended up with equipment for 30,000 people. The only slight difference I have with General Shoup is that it was my understanding that this group had to be able to hold a beachhead for some time, for several days.

STATEMENT: It's very significant that the Commandant of the Marine Corps, whom the President of the United States and the Secretary of State thought had approved this plan, had an entirely different idea of what the plan was. It seems that something has gone wrong somewhere along the line.

GENERAL SHOUP: This whole thing was a function of time.

STATEMENT: But when I asked you, you said they were going to get out of there the same day. They were only going to hold a beachhead long enough to unload the equipment. There wasn't any possibility of anybody coming down there. There wasn't anybody around there. Their idea was to hold that beachhead. I think it is important that when the President and the Secretary of State think they have your view, that they do have your view.

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GENERAL SHOUP: I don't think that the Chairman should go to the President as Commander in Chief on an operation of this kind by himself. There are three people here who are quite knowledgeable. The Chairman undoubtedly has a good grasp, but when you hit something like this, details are important.

QUESTION: During the execution of this operation did you keep informed of what was taking place?

GENERAL SHOUP: It is a question of degree. I had a liaison officer working for me to keep me advised.

QUESTION: The ammunition situation turns out to be the vital factor that caused the ultimate defeat at the beachhead. Did you have a clear picture of how vitally the beach was hurting for ammunition?

GENERAL SHOUP: No, with the exception that I was told that the ship that was sunk had arms and tank ammunition.

QUESTION: But at the end of the second day's fighting no one communicated to you the crisis that had arisen as a result of the lack of ammunition?

GENERAL SHOUP: Yes, to the extent that the ships that were sunk had this vital ammunition. Whether or not the drops had rectified this situation I didn't know.

QUESTION: What was your understanding of additional resupply of ammunition by ship?

GENERAL SHOUP: They had a regular plan drawn up. I can't tell you exactly what the plan was. The equipment was for 30,000 people.

QUESTION: Was it reported to you that two of the cargo ships that had reserve ammunition had fled the area and one got as far south as 200 miles?

GENERAL SHOUP: No, sir.

GENERAL TAYLOR: May I summarize now what my understanding is? That you would say that you as members of the Joint Chiefs first concurred in the feasibility of TRINIDAD Plan; that with regard to the Zapata Plan you concurred that it was the best of the three alternatives considered, and as you saw the plan develop you still felt it had a reasonable chance of success.

GENERAL SHOUP: For the mission as I understood it.

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GENERAL TAYLOR: You feel that the Joint Chiefs recognized their responsibility for advising the President, but did not make any special comments to him mainly because you thought the plan was going along all right.

GENERAL SHOUP: I think you have to preface all these remarks by recognizing that I was not consulted as to whether such a thing ought to happen. That wasn't my business.

GENERAL TAYLOR: The overthrow of Castro you accepted?

GENERAL SHOUP: Yes, that was national policy.

GENERAL TAYLOR: Wouldn't you say that the Joint Chiefs had every right and responsibility if they didn't believe that an amphibious landing of this kind would succeed, to so advise the President?

GENERAL SHOUP: Absolutely.

GENERAL TAYLOR: Were you satisfied with the plan as being a feasible, reasonable plan?

GENERAL SHOUP: To accomplish the mission as I understood it, not the destruction of the armed forces.

QUESTION: What was the mission?

GENERAL SHOUP: The mission was to get some well-trained military people into Cuba, who could gather into their fold and equip all the people that were just waiting for a chance to get at Castro, then these military people could develop a real military organization and increase their strength to the extent that the whole Castro regime would fall apart.

QUESTION: The success of this operation was wholly dependent upon popular support?

GENERAL SHOUP: Absolutely. Ultimate success.

STATEMENT: Not only ultimate success, but any success really.

QUESTION: Who gave you this information on the uprisings?

GENERAL SHOUP: I don't know. I suppose it was CIA. Well, it's obvious we wouldn't be taking 30,000 additional rifles if we didn't think there was going to be somebody to use them. I don't think any military man would ever think that this force could overthrow Castro without support. They could never expect anything but annihilation.

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QUESTION: You'd say then that they would still be on the beach if the plan had been carried out as conceived and depended upon popular uprisings throughout the island of Cuba? Otherwise they would have been wiped out?

GENERAL SHOUP: Absolutely. I don't think there is any doubt at all. Eventually 1,500 people cannot hold out against many, many thousands.

QUESTION: Would you send 1,200 Marines in there to do that?

GENERAL SHOUP: No, I wouldn't, unless 1,200 Marines are going to be assisted by 30,000 Cubans.

QUESTION: Did somebody tell you there'd be 30,000 Cubans?

GENERAL SHOUP: No, they didn't, but we were getting materials ready for them.

QUESTION: Did you ask about the swamp?

GENERAL SHOUP: Yes, I asked about it on the first briefings. Even in the rainy season parts of it were passable by foot and in the dry season much of it was passable by foot. There were a number of egresses other than the roads. That's what we were told.

QUESTION: Were you in touch with General Gray during this?

GENERAL SHOUP: To my knowledge I was personally present each time that General Gray briefed the Joint Chiefs.

QUESTION: But aside from that, did he give you any individual briefings?

GENERAL SHOUP: No, sir.

QUESTION: If you were going to do this again and there was still the requirement that it be a covert operation, what changes would you make? Anything that would be materially different?

GENERAL SHOUP: I don't think that at this time in 1961 or hereafter you are going to do it covertly.

QUESTION: Did you really think that this could be covert in the sense that it would not be attributed to the United States?

GENERAL SHOUP: I did not.

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GENERAL WHITE

(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

QUESTION: What action was taken on the over-all U.S. plan of action for Cuba developed by the JCS in late January?

GENERAL WHITE: I don't know.

QUESTION: What was the JCS view of the military feasibility of the Trinidad and Zapata plans?

GENERAL WHITE: Our evaluation was that the operation had a fair chance of success based on (1) the mission and (2) the intelligence, which indicated that popular uprisings were likely. The next point that weighed heavily in my mind was the probability that this force could escape into the hills to the northwest of the beach area and join with guerrillas there if they were unable to enlarge the beachhead. The third point was the importance of surprise, particularly in the air part of the picture. The Zapata plan was briefed at a JCS meeting. I was not there. Curt LeMay was, however, and he filled me in on the three alternatives; and the fact that the Chiefs thought that the Trinidad operation was still the best, but that of the three alternatives presented, Zapata was probably the best.

QUESTION: As you learned more about the Zapata plan, did you ever make an appraisal in your own mind as to the probability of success?

GENERAL WHITE: I felt all along that the success or failure of this operation depended almost entirely upon the reaction of the Cuban people. If we were able to establish and enlarge the beachhead somewhat, plus other subsidiary operations, if we did these things, the Cuban people would join in.

QUESTION: Describe your recollection of the beachhead plan. How did you visualize that this force would behave when they got ashore?

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GENERAL WHITE: Well, the number one thing that I felt was vital was surprise air attacks on the several air fields. While I don't have a high regard for the Cuban air force, certainly it is a prerequisite for going ashore that you have air control, and I think the air strikes were the key to it and surprise was the key to the key so to speak. It seemed to me that if the location and timing of the attack were not known, that they would have a very good chance of establishing at least sufficient lodgment to be able to escape without disaster.

QUESTION: Assuming the air strikes?

GENERAL WHITE: Yes, and that the air strikes were achieved with surprise.

QUESTION: When the Joint Chiefs commented on Trinidad and as Zapata initially developed to ^{have} being the only strikes on D Day, did that appear adequate to knock out the Castro force?

GENERAL WHITE: It was felt that heavy surprise attack, and if I could have only had one, I would have picked the one on D Day rather than one earlier, for two reasons: (1) I think the early one may have tipped off that this thing was coming, (2) I remember mentioning down there that I was a little bit worried about the relationship between Cuba and Guatemala because it would be obvious that the aircraft were coming from there, and I wasn't quite sure what the situation would be. At another point I thought that if we did do the pre-D Day strikes, there was a pretty good chance that world reaction would be such that the thing would be called off, and I had been keen on the United States seeking the initiative in some areas, and I thought that on balance this was a feasible show and I wanted to see it go on.

QUESTION: How did you feel about the final limited plan of eight sorties against the air fields?

GENERAL WHITE: In my opinion, it was fatally weak.

QUESTION: Would it have been better not to have had them.

GENERAL WHITE: I think the best operation would have been to launch as heavy a strike as we could on the air fields on the day of the attack.

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QUESTION: Who was the proponent of the D-2 strikes, Allen?

I don't recall that point.

MR. DULLES: I think that it was partly in our shop and partly with Mac Bundy, as I recall. The idea of the defections -- this was one of the keys to the idea that the planes that were striking Cuban airfields were operating from Cuba.

MR. DULLES: I can't say whether that limited strike concept was ever brought over here or not. I think it must have been known to General Gray, but I don't know whether it was discussed in the Joint Chiefs.

ADMIRAL BURKE: It was, but not before it was decided to do it. I think that this was done at the behest of State in order to get a Cuban defector ahead of time, so that it would be believed that Cubans were conducting the air strikes from Cuba.

STATEMENT: Well, we'll see what Gray's record shows on that.

QUESTION: You thought that Zapata looked like a feasible plan?

GENERAL WHITE: Yes. However, I felt it was inferior to the Trinidad plan.

QUESTION: Did you feel that you had a reasonable understanding of what the plan amounted to by the time D Day approached?

GENERAL WHITE: Yes, I had a reasonable understanding of the plan as it was supposed to go but didn't.

QUESTION: Would you say you made a personal study of this at least of the air elements?

GENERAL WHITE: Yes, and I had action officers who were privileged with this information who worked very close with the Joint Staff and with CIA and on appropriate occasions they briefed me on what was going on in addition to the meetings we had formally in the JCS.

QUESTION: Do you recall when you learned about this D-2 plan?

GENERAL WHITE: No, I do not. I have no memory of any change. The D-1 strike and the D Day strikes were the ones that I was under the impression would go.

QUESTION: I forgot the D-1 air strikes, Allen. That was discussed I know, but did that ever get going?

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MR. DULLES: Well, that was discussed, but it never went.

GENERAL WHITE: May I say I remember very well the discussion of defectors. We got into it because we had the air defense force moving down to Homestead in Florida with its additional radar, and we wanted to get the defectors in and to be on guard in case the Cuban air force made a strike against Florida.

QUESTION: You were in favor of this plan then?

GENERAL WHITE: Yes, to the degree that it had a fair chance of success on the basis that the objective was to get a rallying of Cuban people.

QUESTION: Did you make any distinction between Zapata and Trinidad?

GENERAL WHITE: In my opinion the Trinidad operation was a better one, but once the decision was made to go into Zapata, we backed it.

QUESTION: You wouldn't have backed it if you didn't think there would be a chance of success?

GENERAL WHITE: I think it also had a fair chance of success, but I think the chances were better in the Trinidad operation.

QUESTION: Viewing this from the point of view of the President, you, of course, felt that the JCS were the primary military advisors. He heard nothing from the Chiefs with regard to any infeasibility of this plan. Is it fair to say that the Chiefs would have volunteered their comment if they really thought that this thing was going badly?

GENERAL WHITE: Without any question. The problem was that there were last minute changes of which we did not know.

QUESTION: You refer to the last minute cancellation of the air strikes?

GENERAL WHITE: Yes.

STATEMENT: But that was just one factor.

GENERAL WHITE: I think that was a very key factor, sir.

STATEMENT: Well, in this operation, I think we would be convinced that the plan wouldn't have been any more successful if we had had the air strikes.

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GENERAL WHITE: Well, I really believe that the Cuban air force had a whale of an effect on the bad outcome. It is difficult to say what an air strike on D Day at dawn would have done, but it might very well have made the difference in my opinion.

QUESTION: In the performance of the T-33s, were you surprised at how effective they were?

GENERAL WHITE: I was surprised to find that they were armed.

QUESTION: You did not consider that they were combat aircraft?

GENERAL WHITE: We did not.

QUESTION: Well, had you known they were armed?

GENERAL WHITE: Well, there again you come back to how effective the air strikes would have been. I certainly would have wanted the T-33s to be one of the main targets of the strike force.

QUESTION: Was it any surprise to you that these T-33s could take out the B-26s.

GENERAL WHITE: No, there was no surprise about that. That's another thing, the B-26s were used as air cover over the beaches. The B-26 is a light bomber.

STATEMENT: Yes, but you knew that was the case -- that that was the only cover they would have on the beach.

GENERAL WHITE: Yes, but they were supposed to have air strikes which would come first and the B-26s, as I understood it, would be used largely for ground support.

QUESTION: You said that you would have recommended that the T-33s be knocked out?

GENERAL WHITE: In planning these strikes for the three airfields, certainly I would have urged that we concentrate strikes on the fields that had the T-33s.

QUESTION: Would you have made a recommendation that they be knocked out?

GENERAL WHITE: We didn't know that they were armed.

QUESTION: Based on the information you had, then you would never have recommended that they be knocked out?

GENERAL WHITE: They would have been included in the over-all plan to knock out Castro's air force.

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STATEMENT: Yes, but they were on the field on D-2, but they didn't knock them out.

GENERAL WHITE: Had we known that the T-33s were armed, we might well have highlighted the field where the T-33s were located.

QUESTION: Did you think that the crews they had were sufficient in number? Did that concern you at all?

GENERAL WHITE: I think the numbers were adequate. We sent an Air Force officer down as part of a team to make an evaluation. They made quite a complete report. The report was very favorable on the quality of the Cuban pilots.

QUESTION: By the time D Day afternoon came, the crews were exhausted because they had to fly from Nicaragua to Cuba in a seven-hour trip.

STATEMENT: This is a very important point. I think the record shows that they had 17 Cuban pilots and about six American pilots. Now, suppose they had knocked out Castro's aircraft and then provided air cover over the beach because the invasion force immediately attracted very heavy forces of the Castro ground movement. As I picture it, this would have put a major strain on this little air force.

ADMIRAL BURKE: I think some of the pilots' energy was dissipated in sitting up all night waiting to go and they didn't go, but this was just as bad as going.

QUESTION: How many pilots would it take to keep two planes over the airfield during daylight?

GENERAL WHITE: Do you want me to check it or give you an off-hand answer?

QUESTION: Did that ever occur to you during this time?

GENERAL WHITE: Perhaps not specifically, but I'm sure I evaluated it in my own mind and my people did.

QUESTION: What was your concept of this plan? What was it intended to do, and how would they go about it?

GENERAL WHITE: It was intended to make a lodgment and then fan out to gain as much of the beachhead as possible, expecting that there would be a great many of the guerrilla people and other defectors that would join in, and we had ammunition and equipment to give them as they came in to the fold.

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QUESTION: The guerrillas were to come in to the beach?

GENERAL WHITE: Yes, wherever they could join in.

QUESTION: Then they would just come down into that area where the landing took place?

GENERAL WHITE: I understand that there were leaflets to be dropped and a general call for the people to rise against Castro.

QUESTION: When was the uprising to take place?

GENERAL WHITE: I think as soon as it could be generated.

QUESTION: Was it to take place simultaneously or within a short period?

GENERAL WHITE: Within a short period, I would say beginning with D Day it ought to snowball.

QUESTION: How did you visualize any great number of these civilians coming in to the beachhead area with Castro's forces coming down the same route, in, behind, and along the lines of communication?

GENERAL WHITE: I understand there were a good number of defectors who came over even under the circumstances.

QUESTION: Did you think that this group of 1,200 people could hold this beachhead?

GENERAL WHITE: There was a fair chance of holding the beachhead if the air was knocked out. We had also anticipated that there would be more uprisings throughout Cuba which would divert the Cuban armed forces elsewhere and they would not be able to concentrate on this one place.

STATEMENT: Just so the record is complete, when we had a briefing from one of the pilots, we asked him about the T-33s and he said they weren't aware at that time of the problem or difficulty with the T-33s and they concentrated on the B-26s.

QUESTION: The question of going guerrilla has come up. It was thought that if things went badly, these people could operate as guerrillas. How was this presented to the Joint Chiefs and how did they regard that alternative?

GENERAL WHITE: On this particular operation, I cannot say. On the Trinidad operation, I've a very clear memory.

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QUESTION: Would you say that the guerrilla phase was specifically studied by the Joint Chiefs?

GENERAL WHITE: Only the fact that there were guerrillas in the area and that it was anticipated that the people would join with them.

QUESTION: Was there any thought to evacuating by sea?

GENERAL WHITE: Not until later in the game.

QUESTION: How did the Joint Chiefs follow the course of the operation after D Day? Were you kept informed of what was going on?

GENERAL WHITE: I was kept informed generally by my action officer.

QUESTION: Did you have liaison with General Gray's office?

GENERAL WHITE: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Were you aware of the criticality of the ammunition situation at the end of the second day?

GENERAL WHITE: I had heard about it.

QUESTION: But you didn't have any realization that the battle would be won or lost the night of D+1 - D+2 unless they got ammunition?

GENERAL WHITE: No. My impression is that in general we had very little knowledge of what was actually taking place at the beachhead.

QUESTION: How would you define the responsibility of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in this operation?

GENERAL WHITE: Number one, we were called on for our views; we gave them to the best of our ability; and once the decision was made to go into Zapata, we supported it any way we could.

QUESTION: Would you say you had the responsibility to volunteer advice to the President and since he received no contrary advice he had a right to assume that all was well?

GENERAL WHITE: Yes, except that a number of things took place that I did not know about. I knew nothing about the cancellation of the air strikes.

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QUESTION: I'm going to ask the same question I asked General Shoup. Do you feel that the JCS studied this plan and gave it that cold hard look which they would have given it had it been their plan?

GENERAL WHITE: Certainly they did with the Trinidad plan. I don't know about Zapata. I was not there when it was briefed. It was my understanding, however, that the basic over-all considerations were similar. I would say we did not make as detailed an evaluation of the alternatives as we did the Trinidad plan.

QUESTION: Looking back on this thing now with the benefit of experience, how do you feel about the covert nature of the plan? Was it realistic to consider that this could be kept covert - by that I mean a plan that cannot be attributed plausibly to the United States?

GENERAL WHITE: I am sure that we could not expect to train a very sizable group of people with aircraft in any part of the world at least any populated part of the world without the world knowing. So I am sure that the training base in Guatemala was well known to the Cubans. This is hearsay. I was told that somebody briefed many Latin American governments about this forthcoming operation to get their views and met with almost unanimous disapproval. I'd say this alone was enough for a tipoff.

STATEMENT: I believe this was Mr. Berle's mission down south.

QUESTION: Do you have any comment on a landing on a hostile shore which is covert?

GENERAL WHITE: I don't object to the military doing covert things; in fact, this may be a wise way for the future on this sort of thing. But there are certain considerations; I don't believe you should have U.S. officers in uniform because this puts them into a different category and they take risks beyond those which are usually expected of them in peace time. As far as covert operations are concerned, I think probably they should be done under the aegis of some agency other than Defense.

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MR. DULLES: The question is, can there be a section in the Department of Defense that has been sheep-dipped or something. How are we going to do this in the future?

GENERAL WHITE: I think there should be greater Department of Defense participation; in fact, I think perhaps the responsibility ought to be placed on military professionals, but I believe it still should be under the aegis of some other agency. I would not like to see this type of operation attributable to the Department of Defense.

STATEMENT: It might have been done something like this. The CIA could have done everything up to and including recruiting, assembling, and putting them into a covert training area, and organizing the covert protection around it. Training at that point could have been turned over to the Department of Defense. Planning could have been turned over to the Department of Defense and the execution turned over to the Department of Defense.

GENERAL WHITE: That's all right with me. However, I think that the cover should be with the CIA or some agency other than the DOD.

MR. DULLES: When you get an operation this big, the cover blows off.

QUESTION: What do you say about the quality of interdepartmental coordination on this plan?

GENERAL WHITE: I think it could be improved very much. I don't know of a formalized body short of the NSC that takes a problem like this and integrates all the interested Government agencies into a planning group.

STATEMENT: It's been a problem for a long time.

GENERAL WHITE: I think not only in this type of thing but in the cold war. After all, in hot war, we're certainly organized for it and we hope ready for it. Limited wars - we're organized for and we hope prepared for, but this kind of covert operation we're talking about now is part of the cold war. The cold war is on every day of our lives and I think we need a similar organization to fight the cold war.

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that it was supported by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In view of all this, do you feel it was given sufficient time and attention by you as an individual and by the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

GENERAL WHITE: I will make the single point that General Shoup made. I think there were times when the Chairman was consulted and although he has been extraordinarily conscientious to keep us informed, I think that things took place at levels above the Joint Chiefs of Staff about which we were not fully informed. On those things which we had cognizance of, I believe the Joint Chiefs accomplished their task.

MR. KENNEDY: For instance, as I look at the records, I see that the original Zapata Plan plus the alternatives were considered by the JCS for twenty minutes.

GENERAL WHITE: I can't tell you the times because I wasn't there, but I believe by virtue of the study that was made on the Trinidad Plan, that it was fairly easy to have a good look at the Zapata Plan and come up with a statement that the Trinidad Plan was still the best, but that of the three alternatives Zapata was the best.

QUESTION: Then your answer is that you feel that you gave sufficient time, opinion and study.

GENERAL WHITE: On an over-all basis, yes, sir.

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COLONEL GAINES

(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

QUESTION: Did you brief the pilots before D-2?

COLONEL GAINES: That's correct.

QUESTION: Were the T-33s considered a dangerous weapon in the hands of Castro?

COLONEL GAINES: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Were the pilots briefed to knock them out first?

COLONEL GAINES: No, they were told to knock out any offensive aircraft, including B-26, T-33, Sea Furies and any single-engine combat type aircraft in the parking area.

QUESTION: Was there any priority?

COLONEL GAINES: Not by aircraft type. The plan was based on destroying all offensive aircraft.

QUESTION: A pilot by the name of Hayden gave us quite a different picture. Was he an important figure there?

COLONEL GAINES: He was one of our intelligence officers.

QUESTION: Was he at the briefing?

COLONEL GAINES: He assisted. However, I was the person in charge of the briefing.

QUESTION: Were these T-33s isolated or were they interspersed with the other aircraft?

COLONEL GAINES: They were isolated to the extent that they were parked on individual revetments.

QUESTION: How many T-33 aircraft were there?

COLONEL GAINES: There were four on the 6th of April parked at San Antonio de los Baños, there was one parked at Santiago de Cuba, and these were the photos we used for planning our strikes.

QUESTION: How many did you knock out?

COLONEL GAINES: We knocked out all but two and then between the 15th of April and the 18th of April they managed to get one more aircraft into commission. Out of the five we feel that we knocked out three during the D-2 strikes.

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QUESTION: Whose idea was the D-2 air strikes?

COLONEL GAINES: I cannot tell you that.

QUESTION: Were you in favor of these strikes?

COLONEL GAINES: I was in favor of any effort that would knock out their offensive air capability.

STATEMENT: It could be argued, I think, that for a limited air strike of only eight planes, you were giving up the benefit of surprise on D-Day. Furthermore, that he should have dispersed his airplanes if he'd used his head.

COLONEL GAINES: That's what I was afraid of. Our original Zapata Plan was based on strikes on D-Day only. They were to make strikes at dawn and then go back in the afternoon and strike any that hadn't been knocked out in the morning raid.

QUESTION: Did you think that the pre-D Day strikes strengthened the plan?

COLONEL GAINES: D-1 would strengthen the plan.

STATEMENT: I can see that, but I have real doubt in my mind as to whether you did well by accepting those other D-2 strikes.

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GENERAL DECKER

(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

QUESTION: What action was taken on the over-all U.S. plan of action for Cuba developed by the JCS in late January?

GENERAL DECKER: Nothing positive.

QUESTION: What was the JCS view of the military feasibility of Trinidad and Zapata?

GENERAL DECKER: We felt that success in terms of the mission, as we understood it, was feasible; that this force would be able to get ashore and establish a bridgehead and thereby provide a catalyst to which other dissident elements throughout Cuba might rally. Trinidad was reviewed first and then several alternatives were considered. However, the JCS considered Trinidad preferable to any of the alternatives.

QUESTION: Did you ever evaluate the chances of success of the Zapata operation in your own mind?

GENERAL DECKER: If this had been a regular military force, Trinidad would have been better for a regular type landing. However, for the purpose of the landing that was planned under the Zapata concept, this area provided a reasonable chance of success.

QUESTION: What was the purpose of Zapata?

GENERAL DECKER: The same as that for Trinidad, to establish a beachhead, serve as a catalyst for uprisings, and get people into the beachhead area to build up the force.

QUESTION: How could people get into the area to build up this force?

GENERAL DECKER: Well, it was more difficult than reaching the Trinidad area. However, this force had a secondary purpose, and that was that if trouble developed that they couldn't handle, they were to go to the hills.

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QUESTION: Did you look at the Zapata area from the possibility of conducting guerrilla operations in the area?

GENERAL DECKER: I thought there was too much swamp. It would be difficult for people to join in the beachhead area. It was visualized that there would be several focal points of activity in the beachhead area.

QUESTION: Did you visualize that one of these groups might be wiped out?

GENERAL DECKER: We pointed out that if surprise was lost they might be wiped out.

QUESTION: To what extent did you go over this plan?

GENERAL DECKER: I went over it thoroughly with Army planners. We reviewed the Trinidad Plan thoroughly. However, since Zapata was so similar, we didn't express our views on it to the degree that we had on Trinidad.

QUESTION: What was the understanding of the importance of control of the air? Were the Chiefs satisfied with the plan without pre-D-Day strikes?

GENERAL DECKER: The advantages of pre-D-Day strikes would be that Castro's aircraft would be knocked out prior to the landing. I was in favor of pre-D-Day strikes two or three days in advance.

STATEMENT: I believe that the Zapata Plan included an air strike at dawn on D-Day. The D-2 strikes developed later in April.

GENERAL DECKER: The air plan was changed several times without my knowledge.

QUESTION: What was the understanding of the JCS as to the action of the landing force if it effected a lodgment but no uprisings occurred?

GENERAL DECKER: There was supposed to have been an announcement of a provisional government once the bridgehead had been established. Then if this group didn't get support from the populace, they were supposed to go to the hills. I don't recall any discussion of sea evacuation.

QUESTION: How did you follow the course of the operation after D-Day?

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GENERAL DECKER: I was out of the city temporarily on Monday, the 17th, but returned to Washington that evening. General Eddleman attended several meetings in my absence. After my return we were briefed on developments at the JCS meetings.

QUESTION: When did you get the impression that the ammunition situation was critical?

GENERAL DECKER: I believe it was on the 18th when I received word that several of the ships had been sunk.

QUESTION: Was it called to your attention that two ammunition ships had gone as far as 200 miles south?

GENERAL DECKER: Not that I recall.

QUESTION: Did the Chiefs discuss whether or not the attempt to keep this covert was feasible?

GENERAL DECKER: It never occurred to me that we could disown supporting this operation.

QUESTION: Do you feel that CIA is capable of running an operation like this?

GENERAL DECKER: I'm not able to say if they were capable. I will say as a general rule, however, that military operations should be controlled by the military.

QUESTION: Do you think that at some point the control should have been passed to the military?

GENERAL DECKER: As long as the United States is going to back an operation of this sort, it seems that the military should be responsible for the whole thing. They should do the planning, training, evaluation, and the execution.

QUESTION: What role would CIA play in this kind of an operation then?

GENERAL DECKER: I think they would continue to handle the strictly covert parts of the plan. The only part that I believe the military should take over from the CIA would be the military aspects of the operation.

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QUESTION: Were you surprised by the effectiveness of Castro's forces?

GENERAL DECKER: I wasn't surprised that most remained loyal. I was surprised at the speed and effectiveness with which they moved.

QUESTION: Did you consider the effectiveness of the T-33s as being a major threat to the operation?

GENERAL DECKER: That point was not made.

QUESTION: How do you view the JCS responsibility in this sort of an operation?

GENERAL DECKER: To give our best judgments and evaluations to CIA and anyone else that asks for them and is entitled to them.

QUESTION: If you thought things were not as they should have been, would you have taken the initiative to advise the President or other appropriate personnel about this fact?

GENERAL DECKER: Yes, and we were making recommendations to CIA.

ADMIRAL BURKE: In this connection, I think that General Lemnitzer suggested (1) that we fly air cover, (2) that the Navy put air cover over the beachhead area at dawn on D+1, and (3) that we strike their tanks. These were not formal or written recommendations. They were simply put forth to Mr. Bissell.

QUESTION: As I recall, the Chiefs did not make any recommendations to the President?

GENERAL DECKER: If we had thought the plan would fail, we certainly would have advised the President.

QUESTION: How could interdepartmental planning and coordination be better effected in a future similar operation, and how should a paramilitary operation be fitted into our governmental machinery?

GENERAL DECKER: As far as coordination is concerned between CIA and DOD, I think it was all that could be expected. I would say, however, that authority and responsibility were not adequately centered in one person.

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QUESTION: What can we do to make our paramilitary operations better in the future? I believe that the Army is the only service with Special Forces. Does the Army have plans for expansion of these forces?

GENERAL DECKER: Yes, but we have a greater capability now than is being used. They could be used in Viet Nam and South America to train indigenous personnel.

STATEMENT: Colonel Kinard indicated that modest increases were planned for the Special Forces in the near future.

GENERAL DECKER: We have increased by 500 this year. If our additional requests are approved, we will increase this force considerably in the coming year.

QUESTION: In your Special Force considerations, have you established an R&D factor?

GENERAL DECKER: Yes. However, training is the most important aspect of our operation.

QUESTION: Do you have any other suggestions?

GENERAL DECKER: Yes, it seems that this type operation involves several agencies of the Government, State, CIA, and the DOD. Some coordinating agency would be helpful in drawing on all agencies in order to effectively prosecute the cold war - some permanent agency in one place.

QUESTION: Where should this agency be established?

GENERAL DECKER: Under the NSC or elsewhere but where the President would have direct access to it.

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CIA PARAMILITARY OPERATIONS

Next to appear before the Group were Mr. Bissell, Mr. Cox and Mr. Smith, who were to describe CIA's paramilitary operations. Prior to the briefing Mr. Dulles and Mr. Bissell made a few introductory remarks. Mr. Dulles pointed out that if any changes were to be made in the responsibilities for covert or paramilitary operations the 5412 paper would have to be changed. Mr. Bissell stated that the rules under which an operation was to be conducted determined which agency would have the responsibility for the operation. He went on to point out that the CIA was responsible for covert operations ranging in size all the way from one or two people to a size where the numbers were obtrusive.

QUESTION: But you will need a new definition of covert operations in order to get the obtrusive operations justifiably inside your mission?

MR. BISSELL: Yes, sir.

MR. BISSELL: We need a halfway house. We should admit official, moral support of an operation and then this would make our operations much less difficult.

MR. COX

Mr. Cox stated that he was the head of a staff section in CIA which is responsible for fostering and guiding the buildup of paramilitary capabilities around the world. He stated that where paramilitary operations are relatively small they remain an integral part of the area divisions. However, it it appears likely that the operations are going to be sizable then an internal task force to handle the operation is developed within CIA.

QUESTION: What is your definition of paramilitary operations?

MR. BISSELL: Everything from guerrilla operations to sabotage.

MR. COX: The principles that govern paramilitary operations are: First, the covert support of a friendly government where the knowledge of U. S. support would do more harm than good. For example, in Iran or in Laos. The second principle is the covert

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support of a coup. The third is the covert support of guerrilla warfare, [REDACTED] Fourth, the covert support of conventional warfare, [REDACTED] Fifth, the covert support of expanded warfare, such as our AVG.

MR. SMITH

At this point Mr. Smith appeared before the Group to describe some of CIA's current paramilitary training and operations. Mr. Smith stated that our activities in Laos were restricted by the Geneva Agreement which limited the number of personnel that could be introduced into the country. He pointed out that in Laos the training mission was assigned to the French so that American personnel went in under the guise of the PEO, or the Plans Evaluation Office. Under this guise they came in contact with [REDACTED] He stated that our approach [REDACTED] and that

their strength is now up to 6,700; that up until six weeks ago they were considered a considerable asset. However, four weeks ago they became almost a liability because they must continue to be supported or they will be annihilated. If we abandon these people we will not only be losing their capacity, but more than that we will be setting a precedent which will be observed by others in Asia and which will make it much more difficult for us to recruit people in the future.

QUESTION: Is it possible to keep this group alive?

MR. SMITH: Yes, but we will have to supply them with food and ammunition. We particularly have to convince [REDACTED] that we are in Asia to stay.

MR. SMITH: In South Viet Nam they have different operations in the north and the south. They have the 1st Observation Group which is all drawn from people in the areas of the north. However, due to the criticality of the situation in South Viet Nam this group, while specially trained for operations in the north, has been pulled out and is being utilized in South Viet Nam.

QUESTION: Are these men being trained to be guerrillas?

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MR. SMITH: They have three functions - intelligence reconnaissance, locate and establish secure bases, and provide a cadre for expanded resistance.

QUESTION: Could this force be expanded rapidly?

MR. SMITH: No, there are not enough refugees and, of course, there are tight controls exercised against us particularly by the Polish and Indian representatives on the Truce Commission.

QUESTION: Is there any difference in the language between the people from the north and south?

MR. SMITH: Yes, sir, and in their appearance, outlook, energy, et cetera.

STATEMENT: You paint a discouraging picture of North Viet Nam.

MR. SMITH: Yes, because Diem feels he needs to concentrate on the south. He indicates he can't be concerned with a sore toe when he has a knife in his heart.

STATEMENT: I'd like to see the Communists start chasing our guerrillas for a change.

MR. SMITH: We've tried this a number of times with Diem. However, each time that we get the people trained, he utilizes them in the south.

MR. COX

At this point Mr. Cox returned before the Group to discuss the paramilitary situation concerning the [REDACTED]

QUESTION: Are you ready to send [REDACTED]

MR. DULLES: [REDACTED] has been pushing hard for dropping parachute teams to work [REDACTED]. However, we put in some teams and the take wasn't very good. The small teams don't seem to be able to survive. Consequently, [REDACTED] now wants to put in at least 20-man teams so that they might be a nucleus of resistance. At the moment, however, we have no contact with any of the teams that we have previously put [REDACTED]. In addition to our Asian operations, we are planning [REDACTED] in the Middle East.

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and the Congo and we have [REDACTED] in the event of a hot war [REDACTED]

MR. BISSELL: However, we feel that this [REDACTED] capability is essentially wasted because they have no cold war capability at the moment. We believe this program should be revitalized so that they can play a role in the cold war.

MR. COX: We have started a new covert [REDACTED] program.

MR. BISSELL: We would like to have some control [REDACTED] in the same manner that the Communists do all over the world, where we can have [REDACTED]

MR. COX: We are starting a program for better selection and handling of foreign students. Everyone expects Americanism to rub off on visitors. However, this just hasn't proved to be the case. Now some of the problem areas are: First, the availability of military personnel that are sheep-dipped and quickly available. Second, we would like to have similar units to the [REDACTED] Third, we would like to see interagency coordination improved on the expanded operations. We would like to see the ground rules established in advance. Fourth, we need a program for expansion funds.

MR. BISSELL: We believe that the ground rules should be written when the project is first suggested.

MR. BISSELL: One other additional capability we'd like to acquire is to have assets similar to CAT. It has been a very great convenience to the United States Government to have the CAT operation. We are trying to establish similar organizations in the Middle East and Africa.

At this point the paramilitary briefing team from CIA left and Commander Mitchell briefed on the chronology of the ship movements based on the ship dispatches to and from the BLAGAR. Inasmuch as the script of Commander Mitchell's presentation was distributed to the members, no notes have been entered herein.

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~~NO DISSEMINATION~~

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 NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
 MAR 3 3 20 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, WH/4

SUBJECT: Policy Decisions Required for Conduct of
 Strike Operations Against Government of
 Cuba

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline the current status of our preparations for the conduct of amphibious/airborne and tactical air operations against the Government of Cuba and to set forth certain requirements for policy decisions which must be reached and implemented if these operations are to be carried out.

2. Concept:

As a basis for the policy requirements to be presented below, it would appear appropriate to review briefly the concept of the strike operations contemplated and outline the objectives which these operations are designed to accomplish.

The concept envisages the seizure of a small lodgment on Cuban soil by an all-Cuban amphibious/airborne force of about 750 men. The landings in Cuba will be preceded by a tactical air preparation, beginning at dawn of D+1 Day. The primary purpose of the air preparation will be to destroy or neutralize all Cuban military aircraft and naval vessels constituting a threat to the invasion force. When this task is accomplished, attacks will then be directed against other military targets, including artillery parks, tank parks, military vehicles, supply dumps, etc. Close air support will be provided to the invasion force on D-Day and thereafter as long as the force is engaged in combat. The primary targets during this time will be opposing military formations in the field. Particular efforts will be made to interdict opposing troop movements against the lodgment.

The initial mission of the invasion force will be to seize and defend a small area, which under ideal conditions will include an airfield and access to the sea for logistic support. Plans must provide, however, for the eventuality that the force will be driven into a tight defensive formation which will preclude supply by sea or arrival of an airfield. Under such circumstances supply would have to be provided entirely by air drop. The primary objective of the force will be to survive and maintain its integrity on Cuban soil. There will be no early attempt to break out of the lodgment for further

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offensive operations unless and until there is a general uprising against the Castro regime or overt military intervention by United States forces has taken place.

It is expected that these operations will precipitate a general uprising throughout Cuba and cause the revolt of large segments of the Cuban Army and Militia. The Regiment, it is hoped, will serve as a rallying point for the thousands who are ready for overt assistance to Castro but who hesitate to act until they can feel some assurance of success. A general revolt in Cuba, if one is successfully triggered by our operations, may serve to topple the Castro regime within a period of weeks.

If matters do not develop as postulated above, the Regiment established by our forces could be used as the site for establishment of a provisional government which can be recognized by the United States, and hopefully by other American states, and given overt military assistance. The way will then be paved for United States military intervention aimed at pacification of Cuba, and this will result in the prompt overthrow of the Castro Government.

While this power is directed to the subject of strike operations, it should not be presumed that other paramilitary programs will be suspended or abandoned. These are being intensified and accelerated. They include the supply by air and sea of guerrilla elements in Cuba, the conduct of sabotage operations, the indoctrination of specially trained paramilitary forces, and the expansion of our agent networks throughout the island.

3. Status of Forces:

a. Air. The Project tactical air force includes ten F-26 aircraft currently based in Guatemala and at Eglin Air Force Base. However, there are only five Cuban F-26 pilots available at this time who are considered to be of high technical competence. Six additional Cuban pilots are available, but their proficiency is questionable.

It is planned that seven C-54 and four C-46 transports will be available for strike operations. Here again, the number of qualified Cuban crews is insufficient. There is one qualified C-54 crew on hand at this time, and three C-46 crews.

Aviation ordinance for conduct of strike operations is yet to be positioned at the strike base in Nicaragua. Necessary construction and repairs at this base are now scheduled to commence, and there appears to be no obstacle to placing this facility in a state of readiness in time for operations as planned.

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Conclusions:

(1) The number of qualified Cuban D-26 crews available is inadequate for conduct of strike operations.

(2) The number of qualified Cuban transport crews is grossly inadequate for supply operations which will be required in support of the invasion force and other friendly forces which are expected to join or operate in conjunction with it in many parts of Cuba. It is anticipated that multiple sorties will be required on a daily basis.

b. Landing. Amphibious craft for the operation, including three LCU's and four LCVP's are now at Viages, Puerto Rico, where Cuban crew training is progressing satisfactorily. These craft with their crews will soon be ready for operations.

The *BARBARA J* (LCI), now enroute to the United States from Puerto Rico, requires repairs which may take up to two weeks for completion. The sister ship, the *BLAGAR*, is outfitting in Miami, and its crew is being assembled. It is expected that both vessels will be fully operational by mid-January at the latest.

In view of the difficulty and delay encountered in purchasing, outfitting and readying for sea the two LCI's, the decision has been reached to purchase no more major vessels, but to charter them instead. The motor ship, *RIO ESCOBEDO* (converted LST) will be chartered this week and one additional steam ship, *Esmeralda* Lagoon, will be chartered early in February. Both ships, along with a Peruvianian Corporation controlled by the *QUARTIA* family of Cuba, who are actively cooperating with this Project. These two ships will provide sufficient lift for troops and supplies in the invasion operation.

Conclusion:

Maritime assets required will be available in ample time for strike operations in late February.

c. Ground. There are approximately 500 USMC personnel now in training in Guatemala. Reports being received in the USMC regarding drive now underway in Miami indicate that extraordinary resources may be required if the main of the Assault Brigade was to be called to the planned strength of 750 by mid-January. Special recruiting teams composed of members of the Assault Brigade are being brought to Miami to assist in recruiting of men in that city and possibly in other countries, notably Mexico and Venezuela.

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-4-

All recruits should be available by mid-January to allow at least four to six weeks of training prior to commitment.

The Assault Brigade has been formed into its basic organization (a quadrigular infantry battalion, including four rifle companies, and a weapons company). Training is proceeding to the extent possible with the limited number of military instructors available. This force cannot be adequately trained for combat unless additional military trainers are provided.

Conclusions:

(1) It is probable that the Assault Brigade can reach its planned strength of 770 prior to commitment, but it is possible that upwards of 100 of these men will be recruited too late for adequate training.

(2) Unless U. S. Army Special Forces training teams as requested are sent promptly to Guatemala, the Assault Brigade cannot be ready for combat by late February as planned and desired.

(3) The Assault Brigade should not be committed to action until it has received at least four and preferably six weeks of training under supervision of the U. S. Army teams. This means that the latter half of February is the earliest satisfactory time for the strike operation.

b. Major Policy Questions Requiring Resolution:

In order that planning and preparation for the strike operation may proceed in an orderly manner and correct positioning of hundreds of tons of supplies and equipment can be effected, a number of firm decisions concerning major questions of policy are required. These are discussed below.

a. The Concept Itself.

Discussion. The question of whether the incoming administration of President-elect Kennedy will concur in the conduct of the strike operations outlined above needs to be resolved at the earliest possible time. If these operations are not to be conducted, then preparations for them should cease forthwith in order to avoid the needless waste of great human effort and many millions of dollars. Recruitment of additional Cuban personnel should be stopped, for every new recruit who is not employed in operations as intended presents an additional problem of eventual disposition.

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Recommendation. That the Director of Central Intelligence attempt to determine the position of the President-Elect and his Secretary of State-Designate in regard to this question as soon as possible.

b. Timing of the Operation.

If Army Special Forces training teams are made available and dispatched to Guatemala by mid-January, the Assault Brigade can achieve acceptable readiness for combat during the latter half of February, 1961. All other required preparations can be made by that same time. The operation should be launched during this period. Any delay beyond 1 March, 1961, would be inadvisable for the following reasons:

(1) It is doubtful that Cuban forces can be maintained at our Guatemalan training base beyond 1 March 1961. Pressure upon the Government of Guatemala may become unmanageable if Cuban ground troops are not removed by that date.

(2) Cuban trainees cannot be held in training for much longer. Many have been in the camp for months under most austere and restrictive conditions. They are becoming restive and if not committed to action soon there will probably be a general lowering of morale. Large-scale desertions could occur with attendant possibilities of surfacing the entire program.

(3) While the support of the Castro Government by the Cuban populace is deteriorating rapidly and time is working in our favor in that sense, it is working to our disadvantage in a military sense. Cuban jet pilots are being trained in Czechoslovakia and the appearance of modern radar throughout Cuba indicates a strong possibility that Castro may soon have an all-weather jet intercept capability. His ground forces have received vast quantities of military equip. from the Bloc countries, including medium and heavy tank, field artillery, heavy mortars and anti-aircraft artillery. Bloc technicians are training his forces in the use of this formidable equipment. Undoubtedly, within the near future Castro's hard core of loyal armed forces will achieve technical proficiency in the use of available modern weapons.

(4) Castro is making rapid progress in establishing a Communist-style police state which will be difficult to upset by any means short of overt intervention by U. S. military forces.

Recommendation. That the strike operation be conducted in the latter half of February, and not later than 1 March 1961.

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-5-

c. Air Striking.

The question has been raised in some quarters as to whether the amphibious/airborne operation could not be mounted without tactical air preparation or support or with minimal air support. It is obvious in amphibious operations that control of the air and sea in the objective area is absolutely required. The Cuban Air Force and naval vessels capable of opposing our landing must be broken out or neutralized before our amphibious landing force can strike into the beach. If this is not done, we will be carrying disaster. Also, since our invasion force is very small in comparison to forces which may be thrown against it, we must compensate for numerical inferiority by effective tactical air support not only during the landing but thereafter as long as the force remains in combat. It is essential that opposing military targets such as artillery parks, tank parks, supply dumps, military convoys and troops in the field be brought under effective and continuing air attack. Psychological considerations also make such attacks essential. The spectacular aspects of air operations will go far toward producing the surprise in Cuba that we seek.

Recommendations.

- (1) That the air preparation commence not later than dawn of D minus 1 Day.
- (2) That any move to curtail the number of aircraft to be employed must be firmly resisted.
- (3) That the operation be abandoned if policy does not provide for use of adequate tactical air support.

d. Use of American Contract Pilots.

The paragraph above outlines the requirement for precise and effective air striking, while an earlier paragraph points up the shortage of qualified Cuban pilots. It is very questionable that the limited number of Cuban B-26 pilots available to us can produce the desired results unless augmented by highly skillful American contract pilots to serve as section and flight leaders in attacks against the more critical targets. The Cuban pilots are inexperienced in war and of limited technical competence in navigation and gunnery. There is reason also to suspect that they may lack the motivation to take the stern measures required against targets in their own country. It is considered that the success of this operation will be jeopardized unless a few American contract B-26 pilots are employed.

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-7-

With regard to logistical air operations, the shortage of Cuban crews has already been mentioned. There is no prospect of procuring sufficient Cuban C-54 crews to run the normal C-54 aircraft to be used in the operation. Our experience to date with the Cuban transport crews has left much to be desired. It is concluded that the only satisfactory solution to the problem of air logistical support of the strike force and other forces joining it will be to employ a number of American contract crews.

Recommendation.

That policy approval be obtained for use of American contract crews for tactical and transport aircraft in augmentation of the inadequate number of Cuban crews available.

a. Use of Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua.

The airfield at Puerto Cabezas is essential for conduct of the strike operation unless a base is made available in the United States. Our air bases in Guatemala is 300 miles from central Cuba -- too distant for B-26 operations and for air supply operations of the magnitude required, using the C-46 and C-54 aircraft. Puerto Cabezas is only 500 miles from central Cuba -- acceptable, although too distant to be completely desirable, for B-26 and transport operations.

Puerto Cabezas will also serve as the staging area for landing aircraft being into transports such more satisfactorily than Puerto Barrios, Guatemala which is exposed to hostile observation and lands security. It is planned that troops will be flown in independently of the route to Puerto Cabezas, placed in covered trucks, loaded over the train at night into amphibious shipping, which will then immediately return to sea.

Conclusion:

The strike operation cannot be conducted unless the Puerto Cabezas air facility is available for our use, or unless an air base in the United States is made available.

Recommendation. That firm policy be obtained for use of Puerto Cabezas as an air strike base and staging area.

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-5-

F. Use of U. S. Air Base for Logistical Flights.

An air base in southern Florida would be roughly twice as close to central Cuba as Puerto Cabezas. This means that the logistical capability of our limited number of transport aircraft would be almost doubled if operated from Florida rather than Puerto Cabezas. Logistical support of the strike force in the target would be much more certain and efficient if flown from Florida.

There is also a possibility that once the strike operations commence, conditions would develop which would force us out of the Nicaraguan air base. Without some flexibility of operational capability including an additional logistical support air base with pre-positioned supplies in the United States, we could conceivably be confronted with a situation wherein the Assault Brigade would be left entirely without logistical air support. Supply by sea cannot be relied upon, for the Brigade may be driven by superior forces from the beach area. Such a situation could lead to complete defeat of the Brigade and failure of the mission.

It seems obvious that the only real estate which the United States can, without question, continue to employ once the operation commences is its own soil. Therefore, an air base for logistical support should be provided in the United States. This will offer the possibility of continued, flexible operations, at one or both of our bases in Guatemala and/or Nicaragua are lost to our use.

Recommendation.

That policy be established to permit use of an air base in southern Florida (preferably Opa Locka which is now available to us and has storage facilities for supplies) for logistical support flights to Cuba.

J. Hawkins
Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps
Chief, M1/4/PM

Distribution:
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Date:

MAR 22 2000

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NO OBJECTION TO

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MAR 14 2000

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NSC

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IN THIS DOCUMENT

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INFORMAL SECURITY COUNCIL
MAY 3-20-2000

Ne D/A objection
for 4/5/98

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

PARAMILITARY STUDY GROUP MEETING

AT THE PENTAGON

THIRTEENTH MEETING

10 MAY 1961

PRESENT

GENERAL TAYLOR

MR. KENNEDY

MR. DULLES

ADMIRAL BURKE

GENERAL WALTER REDELL SMITH

COLONEL KING

COMMANDER MITCHELL

LT COLONEL TARWATER

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CASE # NLK- 92-100

DOCUMENT # 15

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EYES ONLY

GENERAL SMITH

(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

QUESTION: How can we in a democracy use all our assets effectively without having to completely reorganize the Government?

GENERAL SMITH: A democracy cannot wage war. When you go to war, you pass a law giving extraordinary powers to the President. The people of our country assume when the emergency is over, the rights and powers that were temporarily delegated to the Chief Executive will be returned to the states, counties and to the people.

STATEMENT: We often say that we are in a state of war at the present time.

GENERAL SMITH: Yes, sir, that is correct.

QUESTION: Are you suggesting that we should approximate the President's wartime powers?

GENERAL SMITH: No. However, the American people do not feel that they are at war at the present time, and consequently they are not willing to make the sacrifices necessary to wage war. When you are at war, cold war if you like, you must have an amoral agency which can operate secretly and which does not have to give press conferences. For example, on occasion Drew Pearson had almost verbatim texts of NSC meetings 48 hours after the meeting.

GENERAL SMITH: Those responsible for Government have to recognize the fact that once the Communists take power, there is never a change of party or control except by force.

STATEMENT: We can lose only once, but they can lose ten times and still recover.

GENERAL SMITH: Yes.

QUESTION: We have attempted to do things covertly, which really can't be done covertly, and yet the attempt to do so leads to operational restrictions which in the case of Cuba were very serious.

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~~EYES ONLY~~

GENERAL SMITH: I would take issue with the statement that they cannot be done covertly. They can be done covertly when the situation begins to be threatening enough so that you have to be immoral.

STATEMENT: I think we are now thinking of the Cuban operation which was the landing on a hostile shore of about 1,400 Cubans. I wonder if the attempt to keep the operation covert was a mistake?

GENERAL SMITH: I only know what the papers say, but covert operations can be done up to a certain size and we have handled some pretty large operations.

QUESTION: Should we have intelligence gathering in the same place that you have operations?

GENERAL SMITH: I think that so much publicity has been given to CIA that the covert work might have to be put under another roof.

QUESTION: Do you think you should take the covert operations from CIA?

GENERAL SMITH: It's time we take the bucket of slop and put another cover over it. If you're going to deal with people expert in these affairs, who have no regard for the individual or human life, you can't be quite as tough as they are, but you have to approach it in some manner. The Communists will continue nibbling around the world as long as they find it profitable or until we can find a way to stop it. We must face up to the Communist problem and take effective action.

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~~EYES ONLY~~

Secretariat
76-139

CLASSIFIED MESSAGE

ORIG: JCS
 CUNIT: ME/14/11
 EXT: 0911
 DATE: 31 OCTOBER 1960

TO: JCS
 FROM: DIRECTOR
 INFO: JCS
 CONF: JCS
 INFO: JCS/DC/DC/ADDP/CO/ADDP/DPD/SC/2

ROUTING	
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5	6
DEFERRED	ROUTINE
PRIORITY	OPERATIONAL
IMMEDIATE	

PRIORITY TRAY

INFO: JCS/DC/DC/ADDP/CO/ADDP/DPD/SC/2

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1. PLAN EMPLOY NOT OVER 60 MEN FOR REF TEAMS. REMAINING TRAINED FOR ASSAULT FORCE. INSTRUCTIONS RE THIS FORCE AND RESERVE FORCE FOLLOW.
2. ASSAULT FORCE WILL CONSIST ONE OR MORE INFANTRY BATTALIONS EACH HAVING ABOUT 600 MEN WITH THREE INFANTRY COMPANIES, WEAPONS COMPANY AND HQS AND SERVICE COMPANY.
3. MISSION OF ASSAULT FORCE IS SEIZE AND DEFEND LOGEMENT IN TARGET BY AMPHIBIOUS AND AIRBORNE ASSAULT AND ESTABLISH BASE FOR FURTHER OPS. AUTOMATIC SEA AND AIR RESUPPLY WILL BE PROVIDED.
4. ASSAULT FORCE TO RECEIVE CONVENTIONAL MILITARY TRAINING IN SEQUENCE AS FOLLOWS: INDIVIDUAL TRAINING, SQUAD, PLATOON AND COMPANY TRAINING, FOLLOWED BY BATTALION FIELD AND COMMAND POST EXERCISES. OFFICER AND NCO SCHOOL WILL BE HELD IN OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE TACTICS OF PLATOON, COMPANY AND BATTALION USING SPANISH VERSIONS FIELD MANUALS 7-10 COMPANIA DE FUERZAS, 7-20 BATTALION DE INFANTERIA AND 7-15 COMPANIA DE ARMAS DE ACOMPAÑAMIENTO AS BACIO TEMPS. ADVISE ROEMER LATER. ALL INDIVIDUAL AND CREW SERVED WEAPONS MUST

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7-10-1000

TO: DIRECTOR	FROM: DIRECTOR	DATE: 10/1/54	INFO: 10/1/54
SUBJECT: CUBAN RESERVE FORCE		CITE DIR	
OPERATIONAL		PRIORITY	
IMMEDIATE		OUT 0077	

TO: DIRECTOR FROM: DIRECTOR DATE: 10/1/54 INFO: 10/1/54 CITE DIR

-2-

BE FIELD FORCED. INDIVIDUALS AND CREWS KEEP SAME WEAPON THROUGHOUT TRAINING AND OPS.

5. TABLES OF ORGANIZATION AND EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING DIRECTIVE WILL BE POUNDED (A DELAYED BY HQS REP ASAP.

6. POSSIBLY USING U.S. ARMY SPECIAL FORCES TRAINING: CAPTURE FOR ASSAULT FORCE BEING FORMED. WILL ADVISE.

7. FOLLOWING FORMING RESERVE FORCE TO BE FORMED GUAT TROOPS. THIS FORCE TO CONSIST 300 TO 500 MEN ORGANIZED AND EQUIPPED ALONG SAME LINES AS ASSAULT BATTALIONS. GUAT RESERVE FORCE WILL BE KEPT AS SEPARATE UNITS UNDER CUBA OFFICERS BUT WILL HAVE SAME UNIFORM AND EQUIP AS CUBANS.

8. MISSION OF GUAT RESERVE FORCE IS LARGELY BY ATTRIBUTION AND AMPLIFIED MEANS IN GUATEMALA CUBAN ASSAULT FORCE IF REQUIRED.

9. IF SUFFICIENT CUBANS NOT RECRUITED FOR ASSAULT FORCE GUAT UNITS MAY BE APPROVED IN INTEGRATED LATER IN ASSAULT FORCE.

10. REMOVAL ALL CUBAN PERSONNEL FROM GUAT TO OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRY OR THERE MAY BE REQUIRED. THEREFORE DO NOT DENY BUILD EXTENSIVE NEW FACILITIES GUAT BEING CLARIFICATION. REALIZE THAT ABOVE GUARANTEED AND DO NOT

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PLAN SEND NEW RECRUITS BEYOND APPROX 100 NOW SEND FROM MASH FIRST WEEK NOV
UNLESS YOU INDICATE CAN RECEIVE. REPORT NUMBER BEYOND 100 YOU CAN HANDLE WITH
INFO MASH.

11. PLAN USE TEAMS NOW AND DURING NEXT TWO MONTHS AS SITUATION INSIDE
TARGET PERMITS. CONDITIONS INSIDE MAY DICTATE STRETCHOUT. EARLIEST TEAM
REQUIREMENTS ARE FOR PINAR DEL RIO HAVANA AND LAS VILLAS.
12. ASSAULT OF SIZE NOW PLANNED CANNOT BE READIED BEFORE SEVERAL MONTHS.
DO NOT PLAN STRIKE WITH LESS THAN ABOUT 1500 MEN. SMALLER FORCE HAS LITTLE
CHANCE SUCCESS IN VIEW SITUATION IN TARGET. SUGGEST BEGIN PSYCHOLOGICAL
PREPARATION MEMBERS STRIKE FORCE FOR INTENDED TRAINING PERIOD. CAN ENCOURAGE
THEM BY PROSPECT EVENTUAL BIGGER SCALE STRIKE.

13. NEW PARA 6 ** WILCO BUT NOT FEASIBLE BIWEEKLY BASIS. TENTATIVE APPROVAL
ABOVE PLAN OBTAINED WITHIN . APPROVAL BY . PENDING. WILL ADVISE.
(END OF MESSAGE)

* Comment: Reports on training progress and requests guidance re ops plans

J.C. KING

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DEFERRED

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PRIORITY

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INITIALS

INITIALS

DIR 69972
OUT 88974

PAGE 4

CITE DIR

INFO

C/S comment: S/S recommended Ltg. senior PM representative visit TRAV ALAP to visit staff on latest ops planning, and that this become SOP on a biweekly basis.

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USC, DDP, State

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

9 May 1961

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IN THIS DOCUMENT

Subject: Summary of White House Meetings

23 Jan 61

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4/10/61

1. At this meeting the President was given the general concept for the Trinidad operation and directed that the Joint Chiefs of Staff evaluate the plan from a military viewpoint.

17 Feb 61

2. Mr. Bissell discussed the status of planning and preparations. Mr. Bissell also discussed necessity for a decision concerning the surfacing of political leadership. Mr. Rusk discussed the fact that it would be much better to delay any action and to attempt to build up OAS support. He was concerned about charge of aggression in Latin America but not by 31 March. The President asked if there was anything he could do to develop a political position to support action such as a speech on traditional liberalism in the western hemisphere. He also asked if there was any way the build up of jets and rockets in Cuba could be linked to this operation. Mr. Bohlen expressed the view that Russia would not react if the operation was finished quickly but might react if it dragged on. The President indicated that he would be in favor of a more moderate approach to the problem such as mass infiltration. No definite decisions were reached at this meeting.

12 Mar 61

3. At a meeting with the President, OHL presented a paper which summarized preparations to date for the Trinidad operation. After full discussion, the President stated that he was willing to take the chance of going ahead, but he could not endorse a plan that got us in so openly, in view of the world situation. He directed the development of a plan where no assistance would be less obvious and would take to most again within the next few days.

15 Mar 61

4. At this meeting the Zapata plan was presented to the President and a full-length discussion of it followed.

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The President expressed the belief that uprisings all along the island would be better than to concentrate and strike. The President asked how soon it was intended to break out from this area and Mr. Bissell stated that not before about D-10. The President was also concerned about ability to extricate the force. The President did not like the idea of a dawn landing and felt that in order to make this appear as an inside guerrilla-type operation, the ships should be clear of the area by dawn. He directed that this planning be reviewed and another meeting be held the following morning.

16 Mar 61

5. At meeting with the President, CIA presented revised concepts for the landing at Zapata wherein there would be air drops at first light with the landing at night and all of the ships away from the objective area by dawn. The President decided to go ahead with the Zapata planning; to see what we could do about increasing support to the guerrillas inside the country; to interrogate one member of the force to determine what he knew; and he reserved the right to call off the plan even up to 24 hours prior to the landing.

29 Mar 61

6. Mr. Bissell discussed the results of photo reconnaissance, the possible use of a small diversionary force of 150 and a plan to obtain key defections. The President inquired whether there had been any statements by Castro indicating knowledge of the plan and answer was in the negative. Mr. Bissell presented the plan as to the disposal of the force in the event the operation was cancelled. The general idea was to bring the force into Belle Glade, debrief them, give them food and then reassemble them who would go somewhere at some other training base. The President also questioned whether the force could fade into the brush and not look like a failure and also the possibilities of diverting the force while still at sea. Mr. Bissell indicated that if the operation failed, the force would probably have to be withdrawn. At this meeting the tentative D-Day of 7 April was postponed and the next tentative date set as 10 April. The next decision meeting was set as 4 April.

4 Apr 61

7. This meeting was held in the State Department and Senator Fulbright was also present. Senator Fulbright

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spoke out against the plan. The President again indicated his preference for an operation which would infiltrate the force in units of 200-250 and then develop them through a build up. Colonel Hawkins from CIA expressed the belief that landing small groups would merely serve to alert Castro and they would be eliminated one by one. He indicated that a group of 200 was below the critical number able to defend themselves. Mr. Rusk expressed opposition to the plan but Mr. Borie and Mr. Mann expressed general approval. Mr. McManara also expressed approval of the general concept. The President indicated that he still wished to make the operation appear as an internal uprising and wished to consider the matter further the next morning.

5 Apr 61

8. There was a very small meeting with the President where only Secretary McManara, General Lemnitzer and representatives of State and CIA were present. At this meeting the general idea of fake defections and preliminary strikes were discussed. The President indicated approval of the general idea but indicated that everyone should consider further measures overnight and there would be another meeting the following morning.

6 Apr 61

9. At this meeting Mr. Bishop presented the plan to arrest Max Fierst, to seize a B-25 aircraft known to be operating against Cuba and also to seize one or more small boats being used by counter-revolutionaries. All of this intended to show US disassociation with former Batista followers. Mr. Bishop then gave an outline of the planned defection of a pilot on D-3, coupled with air strikes and a D-2 guerrilla landing. This would then be followed by a guerrilla uprising on D-5 in Pinar del Rio. The President indicated that the council should not be informed ahead of time. Mr. Rusk, when queried by the President, stated that he did not think that this plan was as good as could be devised, but that we should now take a look at other questions that might arise. One would be what would the US do in the event there was a serious call for help? Second, what might the Soviets do? The President indicated that Mr. Hamilton had been informed of the prospect. The President questioned whether or not a preliminary strike wasn't an alarm bell. The President also asked as to the last date on which he could delay or cancel the operation, and he was told 16 April. He wanted to know what he could do if the operation was called off?

3

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and was told by Mr. Bissell that the plan was to divert the force to Vieques. At the end of the meeting the President gave the following guidance: continue planning, spread the convoy, provide additional air protection for the Miami area, increase press conferences for Cardona, limit air strikes to essential targets, and diversionary landing was OK. In summary, the President indicated a desire to use the force but he wanted to do everything possible to make it appear to be a Cuban operation partly from within Cuba but supported from without Cuba, the objective being to make it more plausible for US denial of association with the operation although recognizing that we would be accused.

12 Apr 61

10. At this meeting CIA presented a paper which outlined the latest changes for the Zapata operation including the defections and air strikes on D-2. Many questions were discussed concerning training of additional forces, statements, if any, on D-2 operations, how to prevent headlines, and acceleration of internal troubles. The President stressed the necessity for non-association with the US and directed that all training activities being conducted within the US should stop. He was informed that the go time for preliminary operations would be 1200, Sunday, 14 April, and for the main landing 1200, Sunday, 16 April.

David H. Gray
DAVID H. GRAY
Major General, USA
Chief, Subsidiary Activities
Division, J-5

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~~EYES ONLY~~

16

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

PARAMILITARY STUDY GROUP MEETING

AT THE PENTAGON

FOURTEENTH MEETING

11 MAY 1961

PRESENT

GENERAL TAYLOR

MR. KENNEDY

MR. DULLES

ADMIRAL BURKE

MR. LOVETT

MR. KING

COMMANDER MITCHELL

LT COLONEL TARWATER

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~~EYES ONLY~~

~~ULTRASENSITIVE~~

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~~EYES ONLY~~MR. LOVETT

(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

QUESTION: How should we improve our procedures for handling the cold war, utilizing all our national assets without completely reorganizing the Government?

MR. LOVETT: An attempt to answer the organizational part of your question would require going back to the origins of the whole idea of a Central Intelligence Agency. Toward the last part of World War II, I was chairman of a group which was supposed to do something about reducing the duplication of intelligence services and to attempt to coordinate them. We had a series of hearings and out of this grew what we called the National Intelligence Authority. This Authority went through a series of transmutations from which the idea of a Central Intelligence Group emerged, and it was made responsible through legislation for certain objectives.

QUESTION: There was no legislation behind the original National Intelligence Authority?

MR. LOVETT: The original idea that came out of the military Departments had no legislative backup, as I recall. The latter developments stemmed from the National Security Act of 1947, as amended in 1949. The organization was compelled to absorb some OSS personnel. I mention this because I have the feeling that the introduction of the OSS personnel had something to do with the form of activity to which I would like to direct my comments later on. That particular activity is the so-called FI and PP, Foreign Intelligence and the Political and Psychological. When the President's Board of Consultants was established (by President Eisenhower) small groups were organized and sent out to areas where it was felt there was a requirement for field checks. They

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looked over the station setup and checked over the personnel and tried to get an impression of what the actualities were.

QUESTION: Was this only the CIA or also the Services?

MR. LOVETT: These were also the Service intelligence activities, where they were concerned with covert activities other than the theater commanders' immediate intelligence requirements. The first group under Ambassador Kennedy went to [REDACTED]. In their report they stated that CIA men [REDACTED] were literally getting deeply involved in political activities in two friendly countries. They recommended that we take a hard look at the fundamental purposes of CIA. The second group under Dr. Killian visited [REDACTED]. They reported that the Ambassador [REDACTED] was perturbed by the fact that he had only approximately a half-dozen men, whereas the CIA had [REDACTED] [REDACTED] whereas he had very little. They pointed out that we were deeply involved [REDACTED] and that the relationships between the [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] political parties was far closer than those enjoyed by our Ambassador. Dr. Killian expressed alarm at the possible conflict of interest, irritation, and at least the difference in the amount of money spent by CIA versus the Ambassador [REDACTED]. These two reports came back while Ambassador Bruce and I were making a report on FI and PP. Ambassador Bruce was very much disturbed. He approached it from the standpoint of "What right have we to go barging around into other countries buying newspapers and handing money to opposition parties or supporting a candidate for this, that or the other office?" He felt this was an outrageous interference with friendly countries. He was quite properly concerned about it. I approached the problem more from the authority terms of reference. However, he got me alarmed, so instead of completing the report in 30 days we took two months or more. I won't go into the details of the report. It's in the files of the President's

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Board of Consultants, dated about September or October 1956, and it sets out our findings. However, generally speaking, several of our findings were: First, we expressed a real concern as to the organization of a group that seemed to be so overweighted in this particular psychological, political and propaganda activities, and in the so-called foreign intelligence. Secondly, we expressed great concern about the fact that here was a group that was operating and it was quite an operation, particularly because 50% of the personnel and 75% to 80% of the funds were being spent on propaganda, political, and psychological activities, as I recall.

STATEMENT: In 1956 you included FI - that was straight intelligence collection.

MR. LOVETT: That's right. But when you have the amount of money that was involved in this enterprise you can get into many situations. To give you an example of what I mean, \$400 was contributed by a [REDACTED] to buy his second wife a present in Russia.

MR. LOVETT: The third thing that caused us considerable concern was the fact that the intelligence evaluation, the plan, its execution and the review were all made by CIA, or at least we thought it was.

STATEMENT: I think your memory fails you there.

MR. LOVETT: I think that ought to be checked because I'm not too positive, but the 5412 Group came into the picture in this period, certainly before '58.

QUESTION: Was this set up as a consequence of some of the other work you mentioned?

MR. LOVETT: I think it was an outgrowth of the struggle to improve the whole operation. If you will let me, I will pick this point up a little later.

MR. LOVETT: We felt some alarm that here was an extremely high-powered machine, well endowed with money, and the question

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was how could any DCI navigate, fly, drop the bomb, get back and say what he had seen and everything else. It was an enormous responsibility, particularly when there were ten other guys operating in the same field. But our main concern was with those three points. As I recall it in retrospect, the idea of these young, enthusiastic fellows possessed of great funds being sent out in some country, getting themselves involved in local politics, and then backing some local man and from that starting an operation, scared hell out of us. These points were made and we discussed them with the Director, and a number of what were considered to be constructive changes were made.

MR. LOVEITT: Previously I mentioned I felt some apprehension as to the legality under which CIA was set up. Consequently we obtained the services of some of the highest-priced lawyers in the country who confirmed the legality, but I still have a gnawing uncertainty as to whether or not the authorizing legislation actually contemplated that Central Intelligence would collect the information and then crank up an operation which it would carry out itself. I was concerned as to whether we ought to be doing these things as a matter of policy, or whether it was an authorized function. Let me say one other thing. All that I've said so far relates to observations made at the time and is not the result of hindsight. What I have to say now has some element of hindsight. During the sessions of the President's Board of Consultants, we had two doubts which I think we were a little craven or apologetic in expressing. I think several of us felt two things: First, there was no use in supplying people with intelligence bought at the price of people's lives when the big proportion of the people that received the intelligence, if they looked at it at all, didn't know what to do with it. The second point was that the NSC was not doing its job. One of the jobs of the NSC was to follow up on these covert activities and they simply weren't doing this. Furthermore, the NSC developed compromise papers that represented the lowest common denominator

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of agreement. I believe the President should have one man to make sure that things are done and properly done, and on a need-to-know basis. It's unfair, in my opinion, to say what CIA should have done without pointing out that, while the results of CIA activities might be undesirable, it wasn't from a lack of trying. The NSC wasn't even trying. In my estimation neither the White House nor the NSC fully performed the backup job for the continuing supervisory work which should have been done to make this thing effective.

QUESTION: At some point, will you comment on whether you thought the CIA was departing from the approved programs of the NSC in their operations abroad?

MR. LOVETT: I wouldn't say that it was departing from approved programs. I think, however, it had gone beyond the reasonable area of activities without in anyway being checked by NSC.

QUESTION: Do you have any instances?

MR. LOVETT: An incident that bothered me greatly was the [REDACTED] affair. It seemed to me that there was never a full comprehension - not through the fault of CIA - in either the NSC staff or the President's own mind as to what the method of operation really was. I think the military would have looked at it in a different way. I don't think civilians have the background for this type operation, and I would stand on that. I would also cite the Cuban operation. We had a meeting with Mr. Dulles, Mr. Bissell and Mr. Esterline, and they presented an outline of what they contemplated doing in Cuba. We were considerably concerned for two reasons: First, spending some time in Florida prior to the Cuban invasion, to my utter amazement I found friends talking about these Cuban guerrillas coming up to Miami. Everyone in the Miami area was talking about this and the U. S. activities in Cuba. There were some 20,000 Cubans around Miami and Coral Gables, so my

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concern was how are you going to keep a thing like this quiet with everybody talking about it. The other thing that was bothering me was that I felt the Government, not CIA, had better make up its mind what in the hell it wanted to do. On several occasions we've had clear justification for going into Cuba. But coming back to the point I was trying to make, if we are going to have a country that's run as an openmouthed society with a competitive press competing to see who can best expose our activities, then this sort of thing is just not going to work. It will have to be worked out some other way. The [REDACTED] case was almost a duplicate, in one sense, of some of the things one sees in the Cuban affair. Even without the activity of the blabbermouth, we have an example of what the present organization tends to create, and I'm talking about a system and not placing the responsibility for blame. In [REDACTED] two things were evident, so much so that we put them into the report of the PBC. In 1958 the intelligence community had established [REDACTED] well equipped with a lot of ardent, intelligent, enthusiastic, young men. They had become intimate with the [REDACTED] problem. They became deeply involved and infiltrated into [REDACTED] political activities. This was known to the PBC and, as far as I know, no protest was made. This intimate involvement in [REDACTED] affairs and the strong feeling of partisanship which resulted in rooting for a given party developed to form advice, intelligence if you choose, which said that the dissidents here are prepared to fight and they'll fight like hell. All they need is a little help and support. The government, if not rotten to the core, certainly will not fight as well and we think we can overthrow it and get a government favorable to the West. One outfit that I had some dealings with had a place out there and they felt just the opposite. But we really didn't go into it thoroughly.

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QUESTION: Had you been advised of these activities in advance?

MR. LOVETT: We knew of the political activity. I don't recall the other.

STATEMENT: I think you were briefed. All these things were approved by the State Department. Defense sat in on most of the meetings.

MR. LOVETT: There is no question about that.

MR. LOVETT: After the [REDACTED] affair was over we were asked to review the operation. We came up with two crystally-clear facts: First, the emotions involved in this political fight didn't provide a sound basis on which to plan a paramilitary operation, and, second, every proposed flight had to be cleared in Washington.

MR. LOVETT: When I read the newspaper reports of the defeat of the invasion force in Cuba it seemed a duplicate of [REDACTED] - overenthusiasm for the rebel cause, underestimation of the power of the government in being, hoping that the people will rise in a spontaneous or contrived fashion, and the modification of the original guerrilla program. I won't presume to draw any conclusions from Cuba. I'm not aware of the details, but from other examinations, particularly of 1956, I would suggest that the existing setup cannot possibly work under our form of government, with our form of press, and national blabbermouth habit. Furthermore, I don't think you can have the intelligence collection, evaluation, and planning and conduct of a paramilitary operation all done by one agency, and I don't care who runs it. There has to be a segregation.

QUESTION: But you're not writing off the requirement for having the capability to do this sort of thing?

MR. LOVETT: No, I think you have it, but the paramilitary activities should be separated from the intelligence-gathering function.

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QUESTION: In the military services the man planning and conducting a campaign also has intelligence under his command. How is it that this presents no problems?

MR. LOVETT: The G-2 receives his intelligence from a large number of sources. Not all the sources are under his control. The information collected from these various sources is then evaluated as to the quality of the collecting agent. Then it moves from G-2 into a planning section. Further, the G-2 is not an enthusiast for supporting any particular group or individual. The G-2 is the fellow who says, "How can this fellow know what he's talking about?" He's the one who always wanted to know how, why; whereas if you are out making business for yourself, collecting information and planning an operation without an assigned job, your question is, "What are we going to do now? We are in business. We have 400 men. What will we do with them?"

QUESTION: Why isn't there the same self-interest in the operational side of a covert operation to get the facts to prevent defeat?

MR. LOVETT: I think there is the same stimulant, but I don't think there is either the experience or the ability to judge the quality of the opposition that you might run up against.

STATEMENT: Look at the intelligence on Cuba. Intelligence never predicted any uprisings and I think correctly estimated the strength of the Castro government within very small limits. The way we run it now the intelligence people have nothing to do with operations. They don't even know where the operation is going, necessarily. In the [REDACTED] case there was a general estimate that under [REDACTED] was going to slip more and more under Communist domination. That was the tenor. The decision to do something in [REDACTED] was made on the basis of intelligence and not by the operators, because at that time they didn't even have an operation plan.

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MR. LOVETT: I think it would be unfortunate if I left you with the understanding that there has not been very substantial progress in the Central Intelligence Agency activities, because there has been. In the area of communications and scientific forms of intelligence, the progress in the five years during which I have watched this thing has been quite extraordinary. Unless you've read carefully in this directive, I doubt whether you are aware of the authority which is vested in the Director of Central Intelligence. He has two beautiful hats. One of them fits snugly, and that is the head of CIA as an operating agency. The second hat is that of the Director of Central Intelligence, in which he has control over the whole thing, which I suspect in some areas is beyond human competence because there are only so many hours in the day. I think the organization of CIA must have attention, and this has no bearing on Cuba or anything else. This is a condition that goes back a number of years. We've talked about executive vice presidents so that the Director can have more time and that sort of thing, but this doesn't appeal to Mr. Dulles, and he has reasons for it, although it does appeal to me. One last thing - the amount of publications put out by the intelligence community in Washington is absolutely disgraceful. The intelligence community issues 13 daily intelligence reports - one from State, one from J-2, two from the Air Force, three from the Army, three from Navy, and three from CIA - 13 printed issues, daily newspapers.

MR. DULLES: There's been some reform since that date.

MR. LOVETT: This was as of March 1960, when the President's Board of Consultants had an investigation made of this through the CIA's Inspector General; with the Burgesses, the McClains, the Blakes, the Martins and the Mitchells and so on over here, the kleptomania in these people is simply whetted. There were six weekly publications; ten monthly, bimonthly or quarterly publications in the District of Columbia, and there are many unknown to

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me that I haven't had time to count elsewhere in the CIA and overseas. There is only one counterintelligence publication in the Washington area, and for the life of me I have never been able to understand and I've never gotten an adequate answer to why in the world we don't realize that all intelligence is based on counterintelligence. We've been infiltrated until hell won't have it and yet the several military departments and Central Intelligence have a counterintelligence activity, and CIA has done some good work. They are the ones who turned up this fellow Abell.

STATEMENT: We also turned up all these spies in Britain.

MR. LOVETT: Two questions I would like to pose to this group are: What's the use of having an intelligence organization if we're going to run it as a publicity operation with 10,000 people in Washington? I think we're licked. I think we're licked also unless we get on this counterintelligence business fast. I don't know whether you gentlemen have talked with J. Edgar Hoover, but this isn't good.

MR. LOVETT: We should put it in an official secrets act and the first time we catch somebody with his foot off base, make an example of him. I tried that once in November, 1952, and I ran into difficulty.

STATEMENT: I was advised by the previous administration, that under our constitution, we couldn't have anything approaching the English official secrets act.

MR. LOVETT: I think we could have something so close to it that you couldn't tell the difference. I don't see how you can have an effective intelligence service until you get it.

MR. DULLES: I'm first to recognize that I don't think that the CIA should run paramilitary operations of the type in Cuba, and possibly not of the type run in [REDACTED]. The Cuban operation has had a very serious effect on all our work. I believe there should be a new set-up. I think we should limit ourselves more to secret intelligence collection and operations of the non-military category except as they might be assigned to us under the control

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of the kind of mechanism that we have been working on here. It's not clear in my mind, but I'm inclined to think that in this Government, we do keep our estimators entirely separate from operations. I think if you look at the [REDACTED] or Cuban estimates, you'll find a reasonably good appraisal of the forces in position against each other. I think you're quite right that when you get involved in a thing like [REDACTED] the operators, rather than the estimators, may attribute too much strength to the particular assets that are being marshalling. I think this is a fair criticism and something to be watched. I think, however, that rather than destroying everything and starting all over, we ought to take what's good in what we have, get rid of those things that are really beyond the competence of the CIA, then pull the thing together, and make it more effective. We should look over the 5412 papers and revise them in such manner that paramilitary operations are handled in some other way. It's not going to be easy to find a place to put them; it's very difficult to keep things secret. We did, however, I think have tactical surprise in Cuba when we landed. They didn't know where or when we were going to land.

MR. LOVETT: They didn't know where?

ANSWER: There's no evidence they did. They had no force there to prevent the landing on the beach.

MR. LOVETT: Weren't there some concrete pill boxes in the road section out from Bahia de Cochinos?

ANSWER: No.

MR. LOVETT: It's a tough, dirty business, but in today's world, I don't see how we can avoid going in to guerrilla type operations. I think the Communist method of operation has something we haven't acquired, and that is, the willingness to take abuse from the rest of the world, if it suits their purpose. For a long period of time, we've been primarily concerned with whether the world loves us. This is a false value. We have to acquire respect and trust, if possible, and if necessary, fear, or we're never going to beat these people.

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QUESTION: I get the impression that insofar as CIA is concerned, you feel they should put their main effort in intelligence and counterintelligence?

MR. LOVETT: Yes, definitely, in coordination with the military services.

QUESTION: At the same time you recognize the inevitability of our getting into the paramilitary type operation?

MR. LOVETT: Yes, it's more than recognizing the inevitability. I think we ought to make a national judgment that the world is a rough place to live in; that we literally can't survive under a dual standard where we are the good boys. We can't fight these fellows successfully until we are prepared to go to the same lengths that they are.

QUESTION: Since we must have an effective paramilitary capability, where should this capability be established?

MR. LOVETT: I have a feeling that it belongs in a military type organization but not as part of the Army, Navy, Air Force or the Marines. I don't want to see our Services get into these things until there's been a declaration of war.

STATEMENT: In the Army, they have the Special Forces which are organized with the concept that they would be the cadre put into a hostile country in time of war for the purpose of utilizing and organizing guerrilla assets there. They are not supposed to do this kind of thing in times of peace but it would be a fairly easy orientation.

ADMIRAL BURKE: Technically, the Americans can train people of other nations. What you cannot control is what they do with that training. Once you've trained these people, of course, they have their own ideas as to what they want to do, and they have considerable more power so they can move in the direction that they desire to.

QUESTION: That's exactly what happened to the Nationalist Chinese guerrillas in Burma. However, while recognizing that organization will never protect us from errors, do you see any reason for thinking the military shouldn't be in this?

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MR. LOVETT: No, I don't see any valid objection to it. However, realistically we should be prepared to take a certain amount of odium without going through the rather transparent devices used in the past to cover our training of other people.

STATEMENT: We train these people overtly with our MAAG's. For example, we're doing it in Vietnam right now.

MR. LOVETT: In reflecting on Cuba, one wonders if the ground in Cuba shouldn't have been prepared through guerrilla warfare. If it takes 15 organized troops to one guerrilla, we should attrite Cuba through guerrilla operations. Then at some final point, we should build up a reliable core of Cubans within Cuba. I don't think we can build up any kind of intelligence security outside of Cuba.

QUESTION: This fomenting of guerrilla activity and the building up of the central core, do you visualize these as CIA activities?

MR. LOVETT: I think they'd have a part in it, but a relatively small part.

QUESTION: Would you work in some of the soldier of fortune types?

MR. LOVETT: It wouldn't bother me a bit provided they had a fire burning somewhere.

QUESTION: Would you comment in general on whether a landing on a hostile shore was within the established purposes of the CIA?

MR. LOVETT: I believe this is an area where I doubt that CIA has authority. I have never felt that the Congress of the United States ever intended to give the United States Intelligence Agency authority to conduct operations all over the earth.

STATEMENT: That's generally our conclusions about this, that it fell outside the intended purview of 5412/2.

MR. LOVETT: But this applies to an area greater than Cuba and greater than [REDACTED] greater than anything we have been talking about. The only country we don't dare operate in is England.

QUESTION: In meditating on how to tighten up our procedures for cold war operations to include this extreme form of paramilitary

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operations, we have come up with something tentative which we've set forth on these two pages. Would you please run through these and give us your reaction?

MR. LOVETT: I think this is the right approach. It's a very ingenious idea.

STATEMENT: You mentioned that the U.S. military would not be the actual participant in paramilitary operations, but the trainer of the participant, and that you would have this training capability in the DOD, but outside the Army, Navy, or Air Force.

MR. LOVETT: What I'm trying to point out are two things: one, I don't think that Special Service Regimental Combat Teams of the Army ought to be assigned to guerrilla work, but I do think that in the Department of Defense, made up of experts from the Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force, there ought to be a group which can if necessary supply officers and noncommissioned officers in the same manner in which they were supplied to the Filipino scouts.

MR. LOVETT: There's a situation that's coming up that appears to me to demand attention and that is the 300 American citizens who have applied for and been denied exit passports out of Cuba. If the facts indicate that as a result of Communist activities in Cuba, South America is in greater danger than we have previously been prepared to admit, then it seems to me the question becomes, are we as a nation prepared to say to these people: "You release those 300 Americans by a certain date or we'll come in and get them." That's about as clear an invitation to war as you can have. Unless the country as a whole is prepared to take that kind of a stand and mean it, and tell the rest of the world to go soak their heads - none of this kind of peripheral action is going to mean a thing.

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